SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL
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THE CONVENT OF NOTRE DAME:

OR,

JEANNETTE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

A TALE OF MYSTERY, OR CELINA.

VOL. II.

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JEANNETTE.

CHAPTER XIX.

An unexampled Refusal.

I Yesterday left off, Jeannette, just as the old commander of Mellery with his nephew Saint Ange entered the apartment of M. de Servol, his old friend and our's, at Calais. While my father, with great satisfaction, renewed his acquaintance with the old gentleman, Saint Ange perceived me, flew to me with eagerness, and testified his regret at having been so cruelly deceived with regard to me.—What mean you

ſir?—Ah, Mademoiſelle, Saint Brice! what a wicked woman was that Madame de Linval! and with what monſters of iniquity has my credulous youth aſſociated! what eternal remorſe muſt I feel! what indelible ſhame muſt be my portion!—It is true, ſir, the ſociety of thoſe depraved beings was not fitted for you; and it is no doubt from the recollection of the time you devoted to ſuch ſociety, your diſſatisfaction ſprings.—Mademoiſelle!...you can never conceive the errors I have been guilty of: I ſhould become too odious in your ſight.—Sir, the manners of your ſex are, I am told, much leſs rigid than thoſe of our's. A vicious connexion, which is broken when recollected as ſuch, does not excite eternal remorſe, and is even entitled to indulgence.—Oh! how that word raiſes my ſpirits, and how much I need it! it is too true,

Mademoiselle, I have loſt all right to any other ſentiment.

His uncle, who now called him, prevented me from queſtioning him on this exceſſive compunction, the cauſe of which I could by no means gueſs. Is this, Saint Ange, your eagerneſs to pay your reſpects to M. de Servol, the beſt friend you have in the world, ſaid the commander to him in a tone of raillery, which did not eſcape my notice? Pardon me, my uncle, but I felt ſuch ſatisfaction on finding here Mademoiſelle Saint Brice!...I ſincerely believe you....There is my nephew, my dear Servol, you find him tall and handſome, and he has ſome claims to your attachment, for you was preſent at his birth.—Alas! yes, replied M. de Servol with a ſigh; I ſhall never forget that fatal moment....—Peace! Peace! interrupted the commander; let an eter-

nal night enſhroud for ever ſuch misfortunes!....We have come without ceremony to aſk of you an aſylum for a few months! for I expect here news of the veſſels I have ſent down the coaſt, and which have not arrived: it is now my only reſource; for, as to my commandery, they are making ſuch changes in every department, that I very much fear it will go to the devil, like all the religious orders.

Here the converſation became general, and I felt the moſt lively pleaſure in learning that Saint Ange would paſs ſome time with us. Yet a grievous reflection preſently embittered this ſatisfaction, and gave my heart a ſevere pang. In three months time I ſhould become a mother! What embarraſſment, what ſhame did I feel at the idea of becoming contemptible in the ſight of a man whoſe love and eſteem were ſo neceſſary to my happineſs.

I revealed these harrassing reflections to Madame de Servol, who was entirely in my confidence, and she was alarmed as well as myself. Yet she flattered herself she could be of eminent service to me at that period, and gave me hopes of concealing it from every eye.

The arrival of the commander spread a delightful charm through our whole family. Servol, his friend, and my father, still concealed under the name of Saint Brice, which he had privately requested Servol to keep secret, these three were inseparable companions, while Saint Ange and myself formed Madame de Servol's society, who knowing our affection for each other, assisted us in disclosing it in her presence. Full confessions followed partial confidence, and we were soon, my lover and me, on the best understanding. Yet he still spoke of his errors, his remorse, and the

horror Madame de Linval's conduct inspired. I pressed him one day to give me an explanation of these obscure hints; and he obeyed me, but still concealing his crime towards me. He informed me, that the artful Madame de Linval, still believing M. de Saint Brice was Dormon, a mistake which he explained to me, as I have related to you, my dear Jeannette, that this wicked woman had made me pass in the opinion of her vile society for the fictitious Dormon's mistress. I believed it like the rest, added he with timidity. Pardon me, Mademoiselle, for having offended your virtue so far as to fancy you one of those who live on the produce of dishonour! Culpable error! Your modesty, your virtuous manners, all ought to have erased such an idea from my bosom. But my youth, bad council, the state of almost constant in

toxication to which we were habituated in this houſe of debauchery, all bore me away....all formed a fatal illuſion in my ſight. Yet were we, ſome time after your departure, all undeceived with regard to you; and it was Madame Dumerel herſelf, to whom we were indebted for the information. This intriguing woman, who, to avenge herſelf on Madame de Linval, had palmed on her the fiction of love and an approaching viſit of a Monſieur Dormon, incognito, learned that her rival had fallen into the ſnare ſhe had laid for her; ſhe inſtantly ſat about revealing by letter to Madame de Linval the jeſt ſhe had played on her, informing her that the perſon ſhe had taken for Dormon was a gentleman of reſpectable family travelling with his daughter. Madame Dumerel ſent circular letters to all her acquaintance,

giving a relation of this curious adventure; and thus the vanity, as well as the ambition and avarice of Madame de Linval became the converſation and laugh of the whole province. You may judge of Madame de Linval's fury, the ſurpriſe of her companions, and my grief.....My uncle was ſoon acquainted with this curious affair, it opened his eyes as to his hoſteſs's degeneracy; he preſently made his bows to her, and we left her for ever. Since that time we have viſited ſome friends, and have at laſt halted here, where it has been my good fortune once more to meet with you.

I was irritated, as well as Madame de Servol, at de Linval's conduct; and we ſhould have been ſtill more ſo, if we had known the inſults to which ſhe had expoſed my innocence. Saint Ange was ſilent on this point, and indeed he

felt too great compunction for his crime, to dare to reveal it.

When my father was informed by the commander of this mistake of Madame de Linval's, he laughed heartily at it, little suspecting, alas! what a cruel revenge this abandoned woman had exercised on his daughter. This vengeance, which Saint Ange alone knew, was soon destined to be accomplished, and to deliver me to eternal regret and sorrow.

Yet the passion of Saint Ange seemed daily to increase, and mine corresponded to the excess of its emotion. Madame de Servol, the constant partner of our conversation, acted the part of a generous friend, and only feared the discovery of what she called my imprudent error to my lover. One day Saint Ange hazarded the mention of marriage; he threw himself at my feet

imploring me to confent to our union, which he would inftantly go and demand of my father. I was on the point of encouraging him in this ftep; but Madame de Servol, with an expreffive look, reftored me to prudence, in recalling my unhappy fituation. Ah, fir! faid I to him, covering my face with my hands, that union, fo much defired by me once, can no longer be mine. Do not queftion me further, and ceafe to hope!...

Having uttered thefe words, I precipitately quitted the room, leaving Saint Ange, ftill on his knees, no doubt much furprifed at my refufal and fudden departure. Saint Ange, ftruck as by a thunderbolt, queftioned Madame de Servol, who told him an invincible obftacle oppofed our union.—And what is it, great God! is there one I cannot furmount?—It is, fir, terrible, infur-

mountable!....at leaſt for the preſent.—For the preſent! that is to ſay a time will come....—When, ſir, you ſhall know all; and then, if you perſiſt in your marriage project, you will have no one to reproach but yourſelf!.....—To reproach!...Deign to explain yourſelf.—I cannot; it is my friend's ſecret, and not mine.—Secret!....

Madame de Servol now aroſe, and repaired to my apartment; ſhe found me in tears, and endeavoured to conſole me. My friend, ſaid ſhe to me, it is not a time to add to your remorſe; but if Saint Ange has been the cauſe of your indiſcretion, conceive your good fortune in his now being willing to marry you! of veiling under his name your diſhonour!—Ah, madame, have I not ſaid I know not who has injured my virtue!—Still that uncertainty, my friend? you know I cannot give credit

to it. ſome one muſt have....—None, madame, none!—What do you mean? Could any one have abuſed you in your ſleep....but then you muſt have ſlept ſoundly! Come, come, that is impoſſible!...— I know not, madame, if it is poſſible or not, but I well know, and I call Heaven to witneſs, that Saint Ange is the only one I ever loved, and that with him I have ever followed the dictates of virtue.

Madame de Servol ſhook her head, but did not preſs me further on the ſubject. Yet Saint Ange, ſtill perſiſting in his deſign, flew before he ſpoke to my father on the ſubject, to aſk his uncle's conſent. The commander was quite angry. What are you thinking of, ſir; on you not know that your father gave me a right to diſpoſe as I pleaſed of your hand, and that I have other views with regard to you.

Thus did the commander formally oppoſe the wiſhes of Saint Ange; and this young man, reduced almoſt to deſpair, confided to Madame de Servol, in my abſence, his embarraſſment and ill-fortune. Madame de Servol endeavoured to conſole this unfortunate youth, and adviſed him to obey his uncle in this affair, eſpecially ſince he could not hope for the conſent of her friend. Mademoiſelle de Saint Brice, added ſhe, loves you, eſteems you; but ſhe cannot marry you; Saint Ange, deprived thus of all hope, abandoned himſelf in ſecret to an exceſs of grief.

The period of my confinement now approached, and, thanks to my friend's kind attentions, it had as yet eſcaped the notice of all. Madame de Servol, to extricate me from this fatal embarraſſment, pretended buſineſs at her country houſe. She wiſhed to have

ſome alterations and embelliſhments made there by the return of ſpring. She found no difficulty in obtaining my father's conſent to take me with her; and ſhe took care to arrange this journey ſo well, that the men remained at Calais, while my friend and I departed to ſpend a month at Rémival, where was ſituated her country houſe. There, we daily awaited the period when I ſhould become a mother; and our only apprehenſions proceeded from the idea of a viſit, not from M. de Servol, who had too many engagements at Calais to permit it, but from the old commander, who was very fond of *ſurpriſes*; or his nephew, whoſe impatient affection might ill brook my abſence. However, my friend, by means of a few truſty and faithful ſervants, was appriſed of all the motions of our interrupters; and, on the firſt intelligence of their coming

we ſhould have quitted Rémival for ſome other retreat.

Happily no one came to diſturb our ſolitude; and, three weeks after my departure from Calais, I brought into the world a fine little boy.

CHAPTER XX.

The Father's Joy, and fatal Consequences.

It was about the ninth hour of the morning when I was safely delivered. A faithful nurse, a midwife, and Madame de Servol were standing near my bedside; and, for the last two days the near approaches of my lying-in had so entirely engaged our attention, that my friend had not been able to attend to her usual precautions. I was then a mother, Jeannette, and was holding in my arms, while I covered it with kisses, that infant, which gave me the first idea of his sex, and whom I called my son, my beloved son!—

The door opened, and we beheld,

great God! Saint Ange himſelf enter; and ſtruck with aſtoniſhment at the ſcene before him, he ſuddenly pauſed. What do I ſee? exclaimed he.—I fell back on my bed, deprived of all ſenſation!

Madame de Servol, enraged at the young man's intruſion, and vexed at her own thoughtleſſneſs, which had juſt made him acquainted with my error, ſeverely reproached him for his rude viſit: Saint Ange, ſtill abſorbed in aſtoniſhment, did not make her any reply. My friend flew to my aſſiſtance; ſhe tried every means to reſtore me, and at length I beheld once more the light of day, only to deteſt it. Judge of my ſenſations, Jeannette, my grief, my confuſion.—The intruder was now leaving the apartment; I exclaimed: Saint Ange, Saint Ange, Oh! ſtay, I beſeech you; do not load me with con-

tempt; do not accuſe me without hearing me!—This child, it is true, is mine! but I am innocent! I am indeed.—I know not how—O God! thou only canſt juſtify me!—This is then the obſtacle you once alluded to, Mademoiſelle? replied Saint Ange, pale and heſitating. This is the impenetrable myſtery! Ah! perfidious woman! I could have fancied thee virtue imperſonated on earth!—And ſuch ſhe is, ſir, replied my friend; with me ſhe has no ſecrets; and, what ſurpriſes me, is that ſhe has ſolemnly ſworn to me ſhe was never acquainted with man. She has ever ſpoken on this ſubject with an ingenuouſneſs which inſincerity could not aſſume.—But what an injury are you doing her at ſuch a moment as this! Behold her tears, hear her deep ſighs.—

I here exclaimed: He believes me guilty!—I have always thought, con-

tinued Madame Servol, that ſome villain, taking advantage of her ſleep.—Her ſleep! what mean you, replied Saint Ange, apparently ſtruck with confuſion and ſurpriſe. ....Ah, Madame, deign to explain yourſelf. ..,..How long has ſhe been pregnant?—Nine months, ſir.—Nine months! it is juſt that time. .... Yes, yes, ſhe is moſt virtuous; I am the guilty being....Oh, my wife! oh, my child!

Saint Ange threw himſelf on my bed; he ſeized the child, embraced it with the moſt ardent affection; then, falling on his knees, he ſought my hand to hide that countenance, on which was now impreſſed remorſe and embarraſſment. Madame de Servol, the attendants, and myſelf remained mute with aſtoniſhment at the exclamations of the youth, and no one could gueſs what he meant: at length he explained himſelf

You look on me in ſilence, ſaid he, and cannot believe that I am that villain, that ſuborner!—Saint Brice, Saint Brice! do you remember that night, the laſt you ſpent under Madame de Linval's roof? you ſlept in her apartment. To revenge herſelf, this infamous woman had ſtupified your ſenſes with a ſoporific drug ſhe infuſed in your drink: frantic with love, and other paſſions which I dare not recall, I found the door of your chamber open: you ſlept the ſleep of angels—and—I dared to diſhonour you.

Inſtead of loading Saint Ange with reproaches, a ſoft repoſe ſeemed to ſteal over my ſoul; my peace of mind was reſtored, and I exclaimed: Now, my beloved friend, tell me was I inſincere? am I ſtill culpable in your ſight.

Madame de Servol could hardly recover from her ſurpriſe. What! young

man, ſaid ſhe to Saint Ange, is it you who have thus deeply outraged honour and virtue! this dear girl was then innocent, when ſhe aſſured me that ſhe was ignorant. But let us think no more of it; all is atoned for. Saint Ange, behold your wife and child. Chear up, my friend; open your arms to Saint Ange; you have recovered all your rights to his eſteem.—Oh! when ſhall I ever regain her's! replied Saint Ange. I, who have been educated in principles of virtue and propriety! thus to degrade myſelf! Oh! into what a torrent has vice led me! Madame, endeavour to obtain my pardon.

Saint Ange, replied I in a weak voice, you have aſſociated me with the moſt abandoned wretches; you have been the inſtrument of a monſter's cruelty whom I never injured; you have been the cauſe of many ſufferings to me!

but I will endeavour to forget them, I will pardon you all, ſince you are the father of my child, eſpecially if you will promiſe me never to ſuffer your mind to be diverted from thoſe duties which that ſacred name impoſes.

Saint Ange ſeized my hand, ſhed on it tears of repentance, and we now all gave free indulgence to thoſe feelings of ſatisfaction with which the confeſſion and a lucky interruption had inſpired us. What happy chance had thus brought Saint Ange to Rémival on that day, and at ſuch a critical moment? wearied at my long abſence, obſerving alſo that Madame de Servol ſeemed inclined to ſeparate me from her gueſts by thus detaining me at her country houſe, curioſity had determined him to pay us an unexpected viſit; and, by means of a domeſtic, who had truſted him with a key, which gave him acceſs

by a private door to the garden, he had even reached, without meeting with any interruption, my apartment, where a ſcene the moſt unlooked for had crowned his happineſs, having firſt excited his grief and remorſe.

Saint Ange paſſed the day at Rémival: he ſwore to me a thouſand times that I ſhould be his wife, whatever obſtacles might be oppoſed to his obtaining ſuch a felicity. Theſe words made me tremble. I perceived clearly that Saint Ange feared an oppoſition on the part of his uncle, the motives of which he concealed from me. I beſought him to explain himſelf: he changed countenance, ſhed ſome tears, but was ſilent, and ſoon after departed again for Calais, whence his long abſence had certainly rendered uneaſy the old commander. I paſſed another month at Rémival, whither Saint Ange came to ſee me

almoſt every day; my father alſo paid us a viſit, accompanied by his two old friends. Madame de Servol told them that ever ſince my reſidence at her country houſe, I had been confined to my chamber. My father appeared grieved at my indiſpoſition, but ſuſpected nothing. As to Saint Ange, he grew daily more ſad and dejected, and we perceived that his grief viſibly affected his health. It was in vain we urged him to confide to us his ſecret anxieties. He preſerved an obſtinate and cruel ſilence, ſtill ſolemnly aſſuring me that he would obtain the conſent of his inflexible uncle, or die in the attempt!

We had placed our little Charles with a nurſe, on whoſe diſcretion and fidelity we knew we could rely, and who lived at the fartherend of the village of Rémival. He had been now a

month in this apparently ſecure retreat, when one day this woman entered Madame de Servol's apartment, ſhedding a torrent of tears: "Madame," ſaid ſhe ſobbing, "O Madame, how guilty I am! No, you will never pardon me, never!"—What have you done, Helen? —They have taken him from me, Madame; they have carried him away.—Who?—I know not, Madame, who dared during my abſence.—Heavens! explain yourſelf. Whom have they taken from you?—O God! Madame, my nurſling the little Charles.—My child! have they robbed me of my child? Unhappy wretch!—Oh! ſpare me not, Madame, I deſerve all your reproaches for my negligence; but could I ſuſpect? could I foreſee ſuch an accident?....

Grief abſorbed all my powers: Madame de Servol, not leſs affected,

though more prudent, endeavoured to confole me, and queftioned again the woman: Compofe yourfelf, faid fhe, and tell us at leaft how it happened.— I was gone out, Madame, replied Helen, only for a few moments: my young niece, a child of about ten years old, remained with the little Charles. A gentleman entered the cottage, afked for me, careffed the infant, and told my niece that he was going to carry it to neighbour Vitry, where I might enquire for it; he gave the little girl a letter, went out with the child in his arms, and fuddenly mounted a poft chaife, which was prefently out of fight of my aftonifhed little girl. This, Madame, is the exact truth: you may judge of my furprife and grief, on returning to my dwelling!—And the letter, Helen, have you got it.—Here it is; it is addreffed to you Madame.—To me!

Madame de Servol took the lette r which indeed bore her name on the ſuperſcription, and we both immediately recollected the hand writing of Saint Ange. The contents were as follow:

"Misfortune, Madame, which ſeems to have attended me even from the cradle of infancy, has juſt exhauſted her laſt arrows on me. An invincible obſtacle for ever ſeparates me from her whom I love, whom I ſhall adore till exiſtence ends. A cruel uncle, to whom I have confeſſed all, tears me away, ſnatches me from that ſpot where I have known the joys of love, the exultation of a father. Severe juſtice; honour even preſcribes to me an union, which I deteſt, but which I cannot avoid! I felt it was impoſſible for me to announce this fatal intelligence to Mademoiſelle Saint Brice: I ſhould have

died in beholding her affliction. I have been therefore obliged to depart without feeing her.—But I am a father; and at leaft, if I rob her of her child, if I deprive her of this precious gift, the only being which can confole me when far from her, it is with the pleafing hope of again prefenting him to her, and requefting her to accept the hand of his father.

"Dear and amiable friend, deign to confole her, deign to procure my pardon for this. I have deprived her of a mother's joys. Affure her of every fondnefs and attention that this helplefs and beloved being may claim from him who gave it exiftence; give her my folemn promife that, though my fecret is of that nature which I cannot at prefent reveal, a day fhall come when fhe will know all, and will, I doubt not, pardon all, when the motives,

which now impoſe ſilence on me, are revealed to her. Farewell, Madame it is on you I rely to ſend me frequent intelligence of her whom I ſhall never ceaſe to adore."

The letter had no ſignature: he had left me for ever, along with my child. Judge of my ſituation, my dear Jeannette.—A violent fever ſeized me. My friend, alarmed at my condition, wrote to my father, who preſently came to Rémival, accompanied by M. de Servol. They informed us that the old commander of Mellery, who had for ſome days behaved coolly to them, without aſſigning any reaſons, had left them one fine morning, together with his nephew, never appriſing them of his intended departure, or even charging them to pay their adieus to the ladies. M. de Servol was quite enraged at their conduct, which he could

by no means comprehend, and my father interpreted it by ſaying that he had always looked upon the commander as an original. My father ſhewed me the utmoſt tenderneſs; and, thanks to the obliging attentions of my friends, I recovered apace. He now told me that it was his intention to purſue his journey, and I departed with him, little anxious in what corner of the world we ſhould next reſt. You may ſuppoſe, Jeannette, I did not forget to thank my generous friend, who promiſed to keep up a correſpondence with me, and to give me intelligence of Saint Ange, if ever ſhe ſhould hear from him.

We continued our journey thence, ſtill under the ſame aſſumed name, viſiting ſeveral other provinces of France, and were in Brittany when we received an account of the deceaſe of Madame

de Servol, as well as of her hufband, who did not long furvive her. An epidemic difeafe, which then raged at Calais, deprived me of two friends; of the only woman too from whom I could receive any intelligence of Saint Ange and my child! Wnat fufferings have I experienced, Jeannette! What accumulated misfortunes! You apprifed us next of our total ruin: my father's illnefs fucceeded; however, he recovered fufficiently to enable us to return to Meudon. There I loft the beft of fathers, and you already are acquainted with the reft of my misfortunes. Oppreffed with fo many afflictions, hitherto I have not felt fufficient refolution to relate to you my fecret adventure with Saint Ange; and fhame and regret would have impelled me ftill to conceal it from you, if accident had not yefterday evening con-

ducted hither Saint Ange himſelf, who certainly is ignorant what is become of me, and little thinks that his beloved miſtreſs is the poor Daſcourt, whom he has enquired for, thus obliged to work for her ſubſiſtence! It appears from the letter he has dropped, that he ſtill loves me, and that his hand is free! —Ah, Jeannette! if I could ſee him, if I could once ſhew myſelf to him!—But what am I thinking o' ? Can Saint Ange give his hand to a woman without fortune, without rank..........Oh, Jeannette!

CHAPTER XXI.

Her Wits begin to Work.

The kind and ſimple Jeannette remained long mute with aſtoniſhment, at the ſurpriſing events ſhe had juſt heard, and of which hitherto ſhe had been far from ſuppoſing her friend could have been the heroine. Cecilia, the modeſt and virtuous Cecilia, was then a miſtreſs, a mother, and her father had died uninformed of the myſtery of her love! She had even concealed it as a ſecret from her dear Jeannette; and, though her error was the effect of misfortune, rather than of ſeduction, Cecilia bluſhed at the recollection: under ſuch circumſtances how could Jeannette have the heart to

reproach her? The ſevere Jeannette could only pity her friend, conſole and aſſiſt her with her advice. O my Cecilia! ſaid ſhe to her on the concluſion of her ſtory, through what a ſingular ſeries of misfortunes has your evil deſtiny led you! And this Saint Ange, this man who took your infant from you in ſo extraordinary a manner, could it be the ſame I ſaw here yeſterday evening! Oh, if I had known your ſecret, how I ſhould have examined him! There is every reaſon to ſuppoſe that, knowing you only under the name of Saint Brice, he is ignorant what is become of you, ſince the only confidante of your ſtory, the amiable Madame de Servol, exiſts no more. As you alledge he is free, his hand is not yet given to another: if he knew that Mademoiſelle ſtill lives, and that ſhe ſtill loves him, he would reſtore her child, and probably alſo

give her a huſband. Mademoiſelle, an idea has juſt ſtruck me: Madame de Saint Albin is certainly acquainted with Saint Ange, otherwiſe ſhe would not have ſent him here. I will go and ſee Madame de Saint Albin; I ſhall find again Saint Ange, and will lead him to your feet.—And to what purpoſe, Jeannette, to what end thus diſturb his repoſe and mine? His uncle ſtill lives; that inflexible old man ſtill tyranniſes over his nephew; you may perceive it by the letter Saint Ange has written to him. I am without parents, without fortune, without a ſingle ſtay in this world. I ſhould only find my Saint Ange to be again ſeparated from him by ambition and avarice!—But your child!—Ah! my child, Jeannette, you are right; I forgot I was a mother!—Go, Jeannette, fly to Madame de Saint Albin; get

ſome intelligence of my lover; tell him my misfortunes; my ſad ſituation; not that he may offer me ſervices which my pride cannot accept of, but that he may reſtore me my child, that I may behold once more that beloved infant; that I may again embrace him, and I ſhall forget all my misfortunes!—

Jeannette loſt no time: ſhe flew to Madame de Saint Albin, whom ſhe was ſo lucky as to meet juſt as ſhe was going out: Madame.....—Who are you, my child?—I work, Madame, with Mademoiſelle Daſcourt.—Ah, Mademoiſelle Daſcourt! I am very much pleaſed with her embroidery.—He has given it you?—Certainly.—Monſieur .....Saint Ange?—Monſieur......Saint Ange? What mean you, my dear?—Yes, that was the gentleman who came for it....—Well, that gentleman's name is not Saint Ange. He is a ſon of

one of the oldeſt friends of my family. He never bore that name.—That gentleman let fall in our apartment a paper.....—What? of any importance? —No, Madame; but he may neverthe leſs attach ſome intereſt to it.—Have you it about you?—I took the liberty of coming to aſk his addreſs of you, that we might ſend it him.—His addreſs, my love; he is now far from Paris; he rides poſt; and in a few minutes I ſhall ſet out in order to overtake him.—Madame, I aſk your pardon: This gentleman is not then Saint Ange, nephew of the commander of ......?

Here Madame Saint Albin was told that the carriage was ready. She beckoned Jeannette to withdraw; and Jeannette, timid and embarraſſed, departed accordingly. As ſhe was ſorrowfully retracing her ſteps, ſhe met a woman who ſtopped her, and pre-

ſently threw her arms round her neck. Is it you, Jeannette? exclaimed ſhe; Oh! what joy do I feel to ſee you again!—You regard me with ſurpriſe! Do you not recollect your old friend, the ſiſter Emily, no longer a nun?—What! is it you, Emily? And by what happy chance have I thus met with you again? Oh! a very ſimple one, my dear Jeannette. All the religious orders are ſuppreſſed, and I am once more thrown on the world. I have quitted the convent theſe two years, and have ſince travelled much!.... Tell me now what is your condition in life! I have ſought you at Meudon, through all Paris; I have good news for you.—For me, Emily?—Ah! you, my dear Jeannette! I give you joy! Your fortune is made, my love: it is in your power to reclaim your parents. —My parents! what do you mean? Do

you know them?—No, not I, but I will give you the means of finding them.—And are they rich?—Immenſely ſo!—Ah, Cecilia, my beloved friend, then you ſhall labour no more. I ſhall thus find an opportunity of repaying my obligations to your family! —Who is Cecilia?

Jeannette related to Emily the miſfortunes of Mademoiſelle D'Eranville, concealing from her only the ſecret of her amour with Saint Ange. Emily took occaſion from thence to moralize on human viciſſitudes; and then gave Jeannette the following narration.

Thus, my dear, while deſtiny delights in humbling one, ſhe beſtows on another the means of exaltation, and no doubt it is Providence who has thus conducted me to you, that I might appriſe you of the good fortune which awaits you! Liſten to me with atten-

tion! you muſt know, that after having quitted the receptacle for foundlings, I felt a wiſh to ſee again my relations who live in a very diſtant province. In paſſing near Chartres, night ſurpriſed me, or rather a dreadful ſtorm which threatened ſoon to burſt, obliged me to ſuſpend my journey and ſeek a ſhelter. There was no inn on the road. I was trembling with apprehenſion I ſhould be expoſed to the tempeſt, when I diſcovered not far from me a little deſolate building entirely inſulated, and indeed the only one on an extenſive plain of nearly four leagues. The rain already began to fall; I ventured to enter this hovel and ſk for hoſpitality: I was kindly received by an old man and a young female, who appeared to be his daughter. Thereſa, ſaid the old man to her, give Madame ſome milk; it will refreſh

her; ſhe ſeems extremely fatigued you will remain here to night, I hope. Thereſa will ſhare her bed with you, and you will be doing Jacques a real pleaſure.—I ſear I ſhall incommode you.—Who? what my daughter? Oh! no, ſhe will be very happy to render you ſo ſmall a ſervice.

I accepted their kind offers, and preſently ſat down, with theſe good people, to a table on which Thereſa ſpread a frugal collation. Converſation grew general. Do you come, Madame, from Paris? enquired my hoſt.—Yes, Jacques, I have quitted for ever that city in which I once thought to have ended my days.—Has any occurrence of importance happened there lately.—The religious orders are ſuppreſſed, and I thus have been reſtored to liberty.—Ah! Madame was a nun, then?—Yes, of the convent for foundlings.—The convent for foundlings!

My hoſt turned pale, and averted his countenance.—What is the matter, Jacques?—You have juſt pronounced a word which recalls to my mind the moſt unpleaſant recollections.—How? —I had a brother, God reſt his ſoul! the poor lad never committed but one fault in his life; and he felt ſuch remorſe on account of it, that I verily believe it ſhortened his life. Ah! I underſtand you: an infant, his ſon perhaps, whom he was obliged to place in the receptacle for foundlings.—No, it was not his child, it was a fine little girl of his maſter's: poor thing! he left it in an alley, juſt by the convent; a torn paper by its ſide.— What do you ſay? a torn paper by its ſide? and how long is that ago? Juſt twenty-ſix years to-day.—Aſcenſion day? Merciful heavens! it is Jeannette!—You know this little girl then? She is ſtill living!

—What is her father's name?—I must not reveal to you the names of her parents; but they are very rich!—If she was introduced to them?—They would receive her as the child of misfortune.—Deign to relate to me, good Jacques .....— I am not permitted to reveal the secrets of another. Send Jeannette to me: I will confess all to her; I will restore her to a family, which will be most happy in finding her again.

Delighted at this unlooked-for intelligence, I took leave, the next morning, of my kind and generous host, who again assured me that the parents of Jeannette would indulge her in every wish, if they could once more find her, and I continued my journey. Since that time, my own affairs, have diverted me from the design I had formed of communicating the circumstance to you. However, I sent a letter

to you at Meudon; I did not receive an anſwer; ſince my return to Paris, I have ſought you every where in vain, and I now thank Heaven for having at length met with you. Farewell, my dear Jeannette, I am in haſte; here is my addreſs, and that of the good Jacques, a farmer near Chartres; inſtantly depart in ſearch of this man, who is able to reſtore you to your family; and if you ſucceed, let Cecilia D'Eranville ſhare your proſperity.

The good Emily then embraced Jeannette, and left her.

CHAPTER XXII.

Farewell, Jeannette.

JEANNETTE returned, very thoughtful, to Cecilia. Her parents! it was poſſible to find them again, and ſhe had learnt alſo that they were immenſely rich! It was not for herſelf Jeannette deſired riches or ſplendour; but for her friend, for Cecilia, to whom ſhe would inſtantly give up the half of her inheritance. Cecilia then would labour no longer for her ſubſiſtence; Cecilia would be re-inſtated in that condition of eaſe and leiſure to which her youth had been accuſtomed, and Jeannette would thus repay the tribute of gratitude ſhe owed to M. and Madame

D'Eranville. O Jeannette! how did this idea gratify thy feeling heart! Another thought alſo ſtruck thy fancy, Jeannette.—If Cecilia ſhould again meet with Saint Ange and her child, poſſeſſed of wealth, ſhe might yet claim the hand of her lover; and it was Jeannette who would render ſo many happy! She would then reſide with this fortunate couple, with their little Charles, to whom ſhe would be a ſecond mother. Her eye would meet their ſmiles of happineſs; they would call her their relative, their fond and beloved friend! In what delightful colours, Jeannette, didſt thou deck futurity! For thyſelf alone, thou wouldſt not have ſought to quit the obſcure condition to which thou hadſt been accuſtomed; thou wouldſt not have gone to expoſe thyſelf to the troubles and anxieties which ever at-

tend a great fortune, and of which thy benefactors had offered a fatal example! nor wouldst thou have contributed to verify the predictions which the dying D'Eranville addressed to thee, or have subjected thyself to the possibility of being thrown among those who would be unwilling, perhaps even averse, to acknowledge thee. But friendship renders thee capable of every thing; it is to that ennobling sentiment thou art willing to sacrifice thy apprehensions and thy love for obscurity. The happiness of another, Jeannette, was thy aim, not thy own; this motive alone inspired thee, and enabled thee to surmount all the difficulties which thy feeling heart suggested: these were many. Jeannette must go in search of her parents; but, for this purpose, she must undertake a journey, and would require some money to pay her travelling expences.

Jeannette poſſeſſed not a ſingle livre; all ſhe earned ſhe gave to Cecilia. It was Cecilia who kept the purſe, and this purſe was ſeldom well ſupplied; but Jeannette now recollected, that Madame de Saint Albin had given her an hundred francs for mending her veil and ſome other laces. Theſe hundred francs were yet untouched: if Cecilia would part with half this ſum, it would be certainly ſufficient for the expences of her journey—but how could ſhe aſk this of a friend already embarraſſed in her circumſtances? How could ſhe tell her that ſhe wiſhed to leave her, to bid her farewell, though it was only for a month. Cecilia would then imagine that ſhe was abandoned by all; ſhe would accuſe Jeannette of ingratitude, and Jeannette could not ſay it was for Cecilia's happineſs ſhe laboured. What an embarraſſing ſituation! to

have at once to announce her departure to her friend, and alſo to require of her the half of what little ſhe poſſeſſed?—But let us proceed; perhaps chance may furniſh an opportunity of explaining circumſtances and of making theſe indiſcreet demands.

Jeannette was ſtill making theſe reflections when ſhe entered the apartment of Cecilia. The latter flew to embrace her: Ah, my friend! ſaid ſhe, my dear Jeannette, I have to appriſe you of the happieſt news! Monſieur de Verneuil is free: they have acknowledged his innocence; he has been here; he has enquired for you; he is reſtored to liberty, to happineſs; and, moreover, he flatters himſelf, by means of the new laws, to be reſtored to the eſtates of his family, the eldeſt of which, by a former unjuſt cuſtom, were enriched at the expence of the youngeſt. He is

happy, I repeat, and this kind friend wiſhes to repay us a hundred fold the trifling ſervices it has been in our power to render him. He is inſtantly going to depart on his journey for his own province, and has every reaſon to think that he will triumph over the avarice of his brothers: Oh! what joy it has afforded me!—Have you as good news for me, Jeannette?—Madame Saint Albin—Madame Saint Albin, is not acquainted with Saint Ange; the perſon who came here, Mademoiſelle, does not, never did bear that name—he is not your lover.—Indeed! what then was the name of that ſtranger?—I have not been able to learn; it was certainly not Saint Ange.—Yet, Jeannette, how could this letter in the handwriting of Saint Ange, come into the poſſeſſion of a ſtranger? It is certainly his writing.—Who knows, Mademoi-

selle! this letter was addressed to the commander; this old gentleman may have received it, lost or confided it to some one.—You are in the right, so once more farewell to the hope of finding him.......Never, Jeannette, never shall I see him more! What an unfortunate creature I am.—An invincible obstacle seems indeed to separate him from you—a capricious destiny, or rather a capricious lover; for what motive could induce this young man to leave you! to take from you also your child? I confess, Mademoiselle, this action of his appeared to me very culpable in your relation; it was absolute cruelty! If he wished or was obliged to part from you, he might at least have left you the fruit of his crime; this might have consoled you.—Ah! but it was perhaps to efface the traces of that crime at the recollection of which I have seen him

ſo often bluſh, that he deprived me of the only living proof of it. Indeed, Jeannette, he poſſeſſes honour, delicacy: he loved me, he does ſo ſtill; and though at preſent he ſubmits to a cruel uncle, and yields to the untoward courſe of events, Saint Ange poſſeſſes a firm ſoul, and never will give up a deſign in which his future happineſs depends.—But we know not where he is. Let us think no more of it, Jeannette, but await the events that time may develope.

Cecilia dejectedly bent her fine eyes, which were filled with tears, to the ground; and Jeannette, full o: her deſign, knew not how to impart it at preſent to her afflicted friend. Mademoiſelle?—What is the matter, Jeannette? you look pale and tremble!...—Mademoiſelle?........—Good heavens! how you are agitated! you fall at my

feet, Jeannette! is that your place? Come to my arms, and ſpeak to me frankly. Have you any ſecret to communicate?—Oh yes, Mademoiſelle, a ſecret of the higheſt importance!—Speak then, you alarm me, and your condition deeply affects me.

Cecilia made Jeannette ſit down by her, who at length reſumed ſufficient courage to ſpeak to her as follows.

You know, Mademoiſelle, that I am but a poor abandoned girl, firſt brought up by the charity of a convent, and ſince by the kindneſs of your revered parents? Mademoiſelle, I have learnt that mine ſtill exiſt; I am allowed to throw myſelf into their arms; they expect me; they ſigh with impatience to ſee me.—What do I hear, Jeannette? have you received intelligence of your family, and do you wiſh to know them? The deſire is natural, Jeannette, very

natural; but remember the laſt advice my father gave you juſt before he expired! In what circumſtances are your parents? Are they rich.—Yes, Mademoiſelle, very rich.—Jeannette, ſaid my father, *if you would abide by my counſel, you will remain in that happy ignorance in which you have lived hitherto: your parents have been ſo unnatural as to abandon you! if they are opulent, you may expoſe yourſelf to their ſlights, to vexatious ſuits, probably from heirs whoſe hopes your preſence has deſtroyed, and who will harraſs you with various perſecutions!* Jeannette, now is the time to weigh theſe juſt reflections.—Never, Mademoiſelle, have I for a moment forgot them; but I feel ſufficient reſolution to reſiſt all the allurements of ambition or avarice. A ſecret motive, which my heart cannot reſiſt, impels me.—Oh Mademoiſelle, permit me to

leave you, it will be only for a few days: I ſhall ſoon return; can you ſuppoſe that I will live or die otherwiſe than in your preſence?—But, Jeannette, by what means have you diſcovered your parents?

Jeannette related to Cecilia her converſation with ſiſter Emily: ſhe then added: You perceive, Mademoiſelle, there is not a moment to loſe. In the courſe of two years, this peaſant, the good Jacques, may have died, or may have left the province; it is of conſequence that I ſhould go in ſearch of him immediately. You cannot doubt that I am grieved in leaving you at a time when diſappointed hopes have plunged you into freſh affliction; but you have told me that M. de Verneuil is free; this friend will viſit and conſole you.—Alas! Jeannette, he alſo is leaving Paris, every body abandons

me!—Mademoiſelle, I feel that the energy which the motive that impels me imſpires, would alone reſiſt the pleadings of a heart, which is ready to break at the thoughts of leaving you; but reflect that it is only for a ſhort time; that our—I mean, my happineſs entirely depends on this important buſineſs, and that we ſhall meet again under happier auſpices!—Ah, Jeannette! theſe fortunate parents may detain you, they may ſeparate you from me for ever!—Never! never! what human power ſhall preſent my re-union with a beloved friend! If ſuch is their intention, I will tell them: Keep your gold, your riches and all the ſplendour with which you have attempted to dazzle me: I prefer the indigence to which hitherto you have condemned me, provided I paſs my life with my beloved Cecilia!—Go then Jeannette,

go and ſeek happineſs, and leave me to tears, regret, and general deſertion, for ſuch is my ſad portion?—But I afflict you! you weep, my kind Jeannette! Ah! far from me be the thought of retaining you, of abuſing your friendſhip to oppoſe your elevation! This would be moſt cruel; I ought to prefer your happineſs to my own.—Jeannette, you will want money: you know what we have here? here is an hundred francs: accept the half of them; take the whole if you want it: the work of my hands will ſuffice for my ſupport, and I ſhall be conſoled in thinking that this little ſum may be of uſe to my friend.

Jeannette, affected at her words, ſhed tears, and imprinted kiſſes on the hand of Cecilia. O my friend, ſhe exclaimed, how kindly have you ſpared my feelings! the half of that ſum was

the object of my wishes; I dared not ask for it, and you have offered it me with such generosity! Since you require it, Mademoiselle, I will accept *fifty francs*; and, if I have the happiness of seeing them fructify, you will permit me to restore them with interest: you will not surely hesitate to accept from the hand of your friend a restitution which she owes to you as well as to the memory of your dear parents, my generous benefactors!—Let us say no more on that subject, Jeannette; *I esteem friendship too much to blush at it's benefactions.*—Oh! how these words console me! they inspire me with fresh resolution for the undertaking! they give me courage to leave you!—Jeannette, I believe I understand you; but I also know that friendship ought to place limits to the pleasure of receiving, as well as to that of

offering. Go, Jeannette, fly, and embrace a father, a mother, who will think themſelves moſt happy in finding in their daughter a girl ſo amiable, ſo intereſting as yourſelf.—Kind Cecilia! —In this box is depoſited the paper which was found with you. Until now we have neither of us had ſufficient curioſity to read it. Let us ſee what it contains.

This paper which once had been torn, and of which there remained only a part, was couched in the following terms.

"The name of this child is Jeanne Vic...
baptiſed yeſterday: but as her birth.....
her father. If you blame the cru.....
rid of her, accuſe not his heart nor.....
her mother. The fatality which has purſu....
perhaps of perſecuting them. A day, ...
hoſpital, where they are deſired to keep this.......
known.
Paſſenger! have pity on abandoned
Innocence!"

The two laſt lines were in a different hand writing to the reſt of the letter, they were marked with a pencil, and the words were ill-ſpelt; which ſhewed they were indited by an illiterate perſon! The adminiſtrators of the convent had ſigned at the bottom of this paper the date of the day and year in which they had found the infant. Jeannette pocketed this paper together with her little ſum of money, and the next morning took leave, not without many tears, of her dear Cecilia, to whom ſhe promiſed to write often, and to return as ſoon as poſſible. Let us follow Jeannette, to whom there will happen many adventures: we can paſs ſome time before we again ſee Cecilia; eſpecially as it is not her, but the amiable Jeannette who is the heroine of our ſtory.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Reciprocal Tenderneſs.

JEANNETTE, with her little parcel under her arm, and her papers in her pocket, a heavy heart, and her eyes filled with tears, proceeded without ſtopping, as far as Verſailles, where ſhe reſted a ſhort while. From thence ſhe travelled to Trappe to dinner, and lay at Rambouillet: this was a long journey for a woman. During the night, ſhe could not ſleep; ſhe was thinking inceſſantly on her dear Cecilia, who, moſt probably, did not enjoy herſelf much repoſe that night; and Jeannette, who felt as far removed from her, as if ſeas had ſeparated them,

lamented her having left ſuch an affectionate friend. Jeannette had never known the ſentiment of love; but ſhe could pity thoſe who were ſubjected to this fatal paſſion: Cecilia, far from her lover, her little Charles, and Jeannette, appeared in her mind to have ſuffered all that adverſity could inflict: Jeannette repented that ſhe had thus left her a prey to her ſorrows, and almoſt determined on returning the next morning to Paris; but preſently ſhe reflected on the probable conſequences of her journey; and feeling, how important a change in her fortunes and ſituation would be to her friend, ſhe grew more reſolute in her deſign. Jeannette was gentle, even timid; but the character of her mind did not want firmneſs; and when ſhe had formed her deſigns, nothing could divert her from executing them; ſhe

united perſeverance, prudence, and patience, in attaining her ends; and our readers will ſee in the courſe of our tale that ſhe knew both how to undertake and to ſucceed.

The wakeful Jeannette perceived the morning dawn, and inſtantly proceeded on her journey; ſhe paſſed ſucceſſively through Epernon, Maintenon, and towards evening, found herſelf within a league of Chartres, the high ſteeples of which already attracted her attention. It was now ſhe looked round for the hovel where Jacques reſided, but no ſuch building ſtruck her attentive eye. At length ſhe diſcovered, at about the diſtance of a mile, a little ruſtic cottage, towards which ſhe inſtantly directed her ſteps. The day was declining; and if Jeannette was deceived, ſhe would yet have a full league to travel through this deſert plain before ſhe reached the city.

Jeannette knocked at the low door of this deſolate manſion, a female voice anſwered her, and it was preſently opened. Is this the reſidence of Jacques, the peaſant? enquired Jeannette.—Jacques, good woman? he has been dead long ſince! and I have ſucceeded him here.—What did you want of him?—Jacques dead! and where is Thereſa, his daughter?—Thereſa? how ſhould I know? her affairs are nothing to me. If ſhe owes you any thing, ſo much the worſe: for you will never get paid; and yet I gave her a good ſum for this cottage, ſuch as it is: a very den, as you ſee; there is hardly room to turn in it.—Thereſa then no longer reſides in this country?—I know not where ſhe is, nor do I care: I have other things to mind! Is that all you want?—Madame, it is almoſt night; is there any inn hereabouts?—Not a ſingle

one: good night.—But if I muſt go as far as Chartres! It is far of, is it not.—A ſhort league; and ſince this plain is ſafe, don't be afraid, they'll not run away with you. Good night.

Jeannette, ſhocked at the impertinence of this woman, quitted her with a melancholy heart, and the tears ſtanding in her eyes. She was alone and without hope of diſcovering the myſtery which was the object of her journey. Jacques no longer exiſted, and ſhe was ignorant of his daughter's aſylum.....What muſt become of her? What reſolution muſt ſhe take?

That of going at leaſt to ſpend the night at Chartres: ſhe determined ſo to do, and purſued her road with equal courage and reſignation. It was night when ſhe arrived in that great city, of which they were about to cloſe the gates. Jeannette took the firſt ſtreet

before her and found herſelf in that of the Viſitation. Oppoſite the Convent a woman of the place fell down through her own awkwardneſs, and had nearly involved Jeannette in her diſaſter, who immediately haſtened to aſſiſt her to get up again; and the woman very kindly thanking her, regretted it not being in her power to return the obligation.—Pardon me, my good woman, replied Jeannette, you may render me a very great ſervice; for I am a ſtranger in this city, and I wiſh to find an aſylum where a female may paſs the night with decency.—Come to my houſe, Madame: my huſband will be charmed to receive you, after the obliging manner in which you aſſiſted me. I live yonder: my huſband, Bernard, is a journeyman joiner, and I ſell fruit, greens, and all ſorts of little things for a ſubſiſtence: we have a chamber with

two beds; if you would be pleafed to accept one of them.

Jeannette was fenfible to the obliging offer of the young Bernard: fhe entered her houfe, and was enchanted with the civility of her hufband, who was ftill young, and was rocking a child of about four or five months old upon his knees. A frugal fupper was ferved up, and Jeannette related to her hofts the little fuccefs fhe had obtained in the enquiry after Jacques and his daughter Therefa. She had fcarcely pronounced thefe names, when Madame Bernard exclaimed: What! Madame, is it Therefa you are in fearch of? Behold her here! I am the daughter of the good Jacques who I had the unhappinefs to lofe eighteen months ago. Compelled by misfortunes to fell my thatched cottage to a jealous and bad woman, I afterwards married this worthy man;

and Heaven, in ſending us a child, has bleſſed our labours and my little trade, which ſuits our ambition and our manner of living.

Ah! what! it is you, exclaimed Jeannette in her turn! that Providence has cauſed me to meet with by chance! O my God, I thank thee! I was afraid of returning without knowing what I wiſhed to know!—What do you deſire?—Have you heard your father ſpeak ſometimes of a poor little Jeannette, abandoned by his brother your uncle, and baniſhed amongſt the foundlings, on Aſcenſion-day twenty-eight years ago?—How! without doubt! and two years ſince that, a ſiſter of the hoſpital came to ſee us, and to inform us that the ſame Jeannette was ſtill in exiſtence; we expected her every moment; ſhe is not yet come.—Perhaps you are the perſon?—Myſelf!—Ah, my

God, Bernard! Look then! behold the daughter of Monſieur Dericourt........ that child which they have ſo much lamented! who was born to be happy! Ah, Mademoiſelle! I am overjoyed to ſee you! Your father is no more; but you have a mother left, oh, ineſtimable happineſs, and who will be very happy to ſee you again!—Where is ſhe, Madame Bernard?—Ah, hardly two ſteps from hence: ſhe is our benefactreſs; it is ſhe who deigned to aſſiſt us with her purſe at the moment of my father's deceaſe; in fine, it was ſhe that married us!—What is my mother in this city? —Two houſes lower down. Good God, how aſtoniſhed you will be when you ſee her! when you learn her miſfortunes and thoſe of her huſband! ſhe is ſtill a young woman, forty-eight years old at the fartheſt. Handſome, tall, and well ſhaped: ah, look Bernard;

fee if fhe is not the perfect picture of her?...—Ah; it is ftriking, and from that refemblance alone I might have gueffed that you were her daughter. Let us go, to-morrow morning, not later than to-morrow morning, we will go and fee them together. How great will be her joy! and what pleafure fhall I not experience in fhewing my gratitude for what fhe has done for me, by reftoring her daughter to her!

Jeannette put fome queftions to the worthy Bernard, who informed her only that her father had formerly been a military officer of note. In regard to the misfortunes which had thwarted him in life Madame Bernard kept filent: fhe faid that fecret was Madame Dericourt's; and fhe alone had a right to reveal it. Have I any brothers or fifters, faid Jeannette?—Not any, Mademoifelle; you are an only daugh-

ter, and one day you will be very rich!—If I become ſo, my dear and feeling woman, I hope you will no longer have to continue in a buſineſs of ſo little profit to yourſelf.

Jeannette paſſed a reſtleſs night, agitated with horrid dreams; it ſeemed as if even her dear friend Cecilia was tormented, called upon her for ſuccour, and reproached her with having cauſed her misfortune by her inconſiderate proceedings. Jeannette awakened ſad, her eyes bathed with tears, and her heart violently beating, when ſhe reflected on the approaching moment that was about to reunite her with her mother, a grand lady, a ſtranger to her till that very day.

Madame Bernard got ready her breakfaſt; and perceiving her trouble, ſhe made every effort to raiſe her ſpirits, and to give her courage. Bernard then

went to Madame Dericourt, to know if ſhe could be ſeen. He found that lady reading a letter, which appeared to afford her much pleaſure. Bernard ſeized this opportunity to prepare her for the unexpected happineſs which Heaven had ſent her. He informed her that his wife had found Jeannette again, and that both of them were coming to throw themſelves into her arms. Not any thing could equal the joy of Madame Dericourt, but her impatience to ſee and embrace her daughter. Bernard returned home; and Jeannette, then aſſured of the good reception with which ſhe would be welcomed, followed the good Thereſa, who preſented her to her benefactreſs. Is it really true, exclaimed Madame Dericourt, when ſhe perceived Jeannette? is this that child of misfortune? Are you my daughter Jeannette? and

do they not deceive me with a vain illusion?—Madame, this torn paper found near me.......Yes, that paper; I remember it; I have the other half of it; I have just found it again: here it is: and joined together reads as follows:

"*The name of this child is Jeanne Vic-*
toire Dericourt: she was
baptised yesterday. But as her birth has
completed the misfortunes of
*her father. If you blame the cru*el des-
tiny which compels him to get
rid of her, accuse not his heart nor his
indifference towards
her mother." *The fatality which has*
*pursu*ed these unfortunates may be
weary
perhaps of persecuting them. A day will
arrive when they will come to the
Foundling

Hoſpital, where they are deſired to keep this precious depoſit, that it may be again *known.*"

As to the two lines at the bottom, added Madame Dericourt, "*Paſſenger have pity on abandoned Innocence,*" they are the hand writing of Ferrand, of that faithleſs domeſtic, who......But let us think only on the happineſs of ſeeing you again, my dear daughter! How tall ſhe is! how handſome! She reſembles me; is it not ſo, Thereſa, that ſhe reſembles me?—That is what I told her, Madame, replied Thereſa; ſhe is altogether a picture of you, and that proof would ſuffice to remove every doubt concerning her birth!—Behold her then at laſt, after twenty years privation! behold this daughter of a man whom fatality purſued till his death! Poor Felix! thou art dead, without

having enjoyed the happineſs of embracing thy daughter! Oh, couldſt thou leave the grave to partake the ſweet delirium of thy diſconſolate widow! – Madame.....—Call me thy mother, Jeannette; that that ſoft name may for the firſt time ſtrike the ear of her that gave thee birth! I believe I have not any thing in me to keep thee at a diſtance: you ſhould be free to expreſs your love to me, as I am now to claſp you in my arms!

Jeannette anſwered to the tender effuſions of that good lady; and forthwith to recompence Thereſa and her huſband for the zeal they had exerciſed in reſtoring her daughter to her, Madame Dericourt inſiſted they ſhould both of them quit their preſent condition of life. Bernard was retained as keeper of the houſe, and Thereſa entered into the ſervice of Jeannette,

who they no longer called by any other name than Mademoiſelle Dericourt. As for me, who am her hiſtorian, I ſhall be pleaſed ſtill to give her, for ſome time, her firſt name, under which ſhe has already ſo much intereſted us. Jeannette then, enchanted to find again a tender mother, and who appeared to her ſo eager to fulfil her wiſhes, bleſſed her ſtars, and, the very ſame day, wrote to her dear Cecilia of the happy change which had taken place in her ſituation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Love increases apace.

JEANNETTE was questioned, as might have been foreseen, by her mother, concerning all she had undergone from her birth. Jeannette related the history of her adoption by her benefactors, who no longer existed, and caused her good mother to partake the interest she experienced for the unfortunate Cecilia, but was silent as to her adventure with Saint Ange. Madame Dericourt, with her eyes brimful of tears, penetrated with gratitude towards those who had overwhelmed her daughter with favours, exclaimed; my chil l, this dear Cecilia must be assisted, must be

ſuccoured: let us do better; let us engage her to come and paſs her life here near to us: that will be but a ſlender recompence for the bounties beſtowed by her parents on thy forlorn infancy.— Ah, my dear mother! replied Jeanette, what an excellent heart do you poſſeſs! How happy am I to be related to you! Cecilia, my friend! ſhe will then no longer know toil, indigence! I am going to write you theſe happy tidings...... Madame, you will henceforth have two children who will love you moſt tenderly!.......

Jeannette wrote a ſecond letter to Cecilia; and after what ſhe had ſaid to her before her departure, *that ſhe could not bluſh at the favours of friendſhip*, Jeannette doubted not her friend would haſten to her, and, with a ſatisfied mind, ſhe waited her anſwer.

During that time, elegant dreſſes

came to replace her ſimple habits ; and valuable jewels added a new charm to her attire ; in a word, ſhe adopted the ſtyle ſuitable to her eſtate, and her fortune. Madame Dericourt introduced her every where, to her ſriends, and to her neighbours, and every one remained enchanted with the graces and wit of her daughter.

However, when the firſt moments of viſits and feaſts were gone by, Jeannette took the liberty to aſk her mother the ſecret of her birth, and what could make her father reſolve to abandon her in the manner he did to the lukewarm pity of ſtrangers. Madame Dericourt cauſed her to ſit down, and ſpoke to her in the following manner:

" You have never loved my dear daughter ; you have told me ſo, and I believe you. You have not then inherited the heart, nor the fatal paſſions of

your parents; which is truly a happineſs for thee. Liſten to me, Jeannette: you are going to hear a very ſingular ſtory, which would aſſuredly appear a mere tale to every indifferent being, not well qualified to judge the human heart.

" Felix Dericourt was the youngeſt ſon of Monſieur le Comte Dericourt, Marechal de Camp. Felix had two brothers older than himſelf, but of a very different character from himſelf. Felix was mild, timid, virtuous. Octavius and Roland were proud, ambitious, and debauched. The old Marechal preferred his two eldeſt ſons; ſo that Felix, early attached to a military life, was driven from his paternal manſion, and found himſelf alone, left to his own guidance, wandering from town to town, from garriſon to garriſon, without receiving any letters from his father, who had become a widower betimes.

An officer in Felix's corps was the only friend he could find worthy of his acquaintance. The name of this officer was Briceval—"

Here Jeannette interrupted her mother: Briceval! ſaid ſhe, that name calls to my remembrance.......During my infancy a M. de Briceval, who was an intimate friend at the houſe of D'Eranville. He had a ſon ſix years of age, who....—That might be, replied Madame Dericourt; let me continue, my dear child? Briceval then was the ſon of a man of faſhion; Julius, his eldeſt, had gone to the Weſt Indies, and had not been heard of for a long time. The father of both of them being dead, his widow had committed the folly of marrying again, and eſpouſing a man equally deſtitute of rank and fortune. You know that formerly that was called a derogation. The

woman died in a ſhort time, as well as her huſband; and no pledge of their union except a daughter in her nonage, who being an orphan, was intruſted to the care of Briceval, her young brother, by the firſt marriage. Roſella, for that was the name of this young girl, was brought up at her brother's expence, who had placed her as a boarder in this city, at the houſe of a perſon called Madame Robert, an old friend of the family of Briceval.

" The young Briceval, who did not partake of the prejudice which covered the idea of the birth of his ſiſter Roſella with meanneſs, ſhewed towards that young perſon all the care of a tender father and a ſcrupulous guardian. She was ſixteen years old when he came to ſee her at Chartres, accompanied by his friend Felix. Felix could not reſiſt the firſt darts of love which at the ſame

inſtant pierced his heart and that of Roſella; and whilſt ſhe muſed on the change wrought in her, Felix returned ſad and penſive with his friend, who, without being aware of the miſchief he was doing him, was inceſſantly beſtowing elogiums on the charms and talents of his ſiſter.

Behold then Felix in love; behold him ſighing, ſeeking ſolitude, concealing the ſtate of his heart from every one, from his friend eſpecially, who thought that his melancholy proceeded from the ill treatment he experienced from his family. Felix was fully ſenſible that neither his father nor his brothers would conſent to his marriage with a girl of no rank or fortune; and this certainty, far from weakening his love, ſeemed the more to increaſe it. Irritated by the difficulties which he foreſaw, Felix delivered himſelf without reſerve

to his paſſion, and cheriſhed it as often as he could, with the view of her who was the beloved object. Felix often preſſed his friend to make journies to Chartres to ſee the young Roſella. Briceval, without ſuſpecting his friend's motive, conſented to it, and every interview augmented the tenderneſs of the two lovers, who reciprocally underſtood each other without having ever communicated their mutual ſentiments.

" Felix was lively, heedleſs, and enterprizing; he would at any rate obtain her that he loved; and the exceſs of his paſſion rendered him blameable or the ſcore of friendſhip. Madame Robert at whoſe houſe Roſella was brought up, was one of thoſe women who poſſeſs neither principles nor delicacy. She did not eſteem Roſella, for ſhe found a thouſand faults with her, and ſhe would

have been very glad to remove her to a diſtance from her houſe. Felix after having well ſtudied this woman's character, formed a bold project, and excuſable only from the exceſs of that delirium which troubled his reaſon. Felix was fully ſatisfied that he could not admit Briceval into his confidence, or obtain his conſent to the deſigns which he meditated: in conſequence, after having ſtruggled a long time between love and friendſhip, he gave the preference to the moſt predominant ſentiment of the two. Felix pretending to Briceval that he had received a letter from his father to recall him home, quitted his friend, not without remorſe at his conduct, for he was going to deal him a mortal blow; ſince inſtead of returning to Mr. Dericourt's he went directly to Chartres, to Madame Robert's, with whom he deſired to ſpeak in private.

I love, ſaid he to her, I adore Made-moiſelle Roſella; who I am ready to marry in ſecret for the preſent: for I ſhall be ſome time before I can obtain my father's conſent; but I ſhall obtain it. I have an aunt at Paris who loves me; and it is to her reſpectable manſion that I mean immediately to conduct your beauteous boarder, if you give your conſent.

" Madame Robert made ſome difficulties. A ſum of gold decided her, and this deſpicable woman leagued with an inſenſate to plunge innocence into a moſt dreadful ſnare. They cauſed Roſella to come down ſtairs. They told her that her brother had ſent for her; they would ſcarcely allow her time to make preparations for the journey: and the young Roſella, without any miſtruſt, from her inexperience, believed the falſe tale they related to her. A

Poſt Chaiſe is at the door; ſhe ſteps into it, after having embraced the perfidious Robert; and behold her alone, tête à tête with a ſtranger, at the mercy of that ardent and paſſionate lover.

"I ſhall not relate to you, Jeannette, with what diverſe ſentiments I was agitated, when I found myſelf alone with Felix; for I am that unfortunate Roſella for whom that proceeding was preparing ſo many woes! The carriage brought us in one day to Paris, a city that I had never before ſeen, and where I did not expect to find my brother, knowing that he was in another place. I made that obſervation to Felix who replied: That is true.....he is elſewhere at preſent, but he will rejoin us, Mademoiſelle; he is ſure to rejoin us at Paris.

"Felix doubtleſs little thought that he could read ſo well into futurity. I

was very much aſtoniſhed, when Felix took an abode in Paris, to perceive that he cauſed me to paſs for his ſiſter: I would have ſpoken; but he ſaid to me in a whiſper: This evening I will explain this myſtery to you. In fact, in the evening, when I found myſelf alone with him, overcame by fatal forebodings, I requeſted of him the deſign of that conduct, which had given me ſufficient cauſe of alarm. Roſella, he exclaimed, and throwing himſelf at my feet, you ſee in me a lover who has employed a ſtratagem to poſſeſs you; but a timid and reſpectful lover, and burns to obtain his pardon from you, and a return worthy of his love.—Eh! what! Sir, then you have not conducted me hither to meet my brother?—What importance is a brother to you when you may find a huſband here?—A huſband! gracious heaven!......,You have

deceived me, you !.......Let me fly from you, falſe and dangerous man! let me return to my peaceful dwelling ! I was there happy, I thought you virtuous !—Alas then—can I ceaſe to be ſo in your eyes! Is love a crime? It is a ſentiment that pleads excuſe for every thing.—Neither the ſeduction, nor an elopement....—Roſella !—My brother ! good heavens, what will he think of me!—Nothing but what is advantageous to us both. When you have conſented to give me your hand, I will preſent you to Briceval as my wife: he is my friend; he will ratify the tender tie.—Why did you not aſk his conſent? he had then reaſons to refuſe it?—None; on his part there is not any thing to fear; but, Roſella, I have a father who is vain and ambitious.....Briceval would have been afraid....Roſel-

la, your hand, and we ſhall bring to reaſon both my father and my friend!

"I liſtened to him no longer: I wept, I accuſed him, I was willing to to go out, return to Chartres......But, Jeannette, muſt I avow it to you? Love pleaded in my heart in favour of the perfidious man; it undertook his defence, and cauſed me to feel that of all the evils that might befall me, that of flying, and ſeparating myſelf from him, was the moſt painful......I continued weeping; I did not yield, but I remained. To be ſhort, Jeannette, you muſt know that friends, a worthy kinſwoman whom he had at Paris, the tears, the prayers, all conſpired to ſoften my reſiſtance, and I had the weakneſs to contract a clandeſtine marriage with him!......

"In the mean time, Briceval, not receiving any letters from his friend,

whom he ſuppoſed at a great diſtance off, or from me, whom he thought always at Madame Robert's houſe, poſted to Chartres, and remained very much aſtoniſhed when he learnt that Felix had come to fetch me in his name. Briceval beſtowed the moſt ſevere reproaches on Madame Robert, who perfectly acting the part of a perſon taken by ſurprize, excuſed her complaiſance, grounded on the friendſhip which united Felix to Briceval, a friendſhip that had not given her the leaſt doubt concerning the intentions of the former.—Whither are they gone, Madame? theſe perfidies?—Sir, I know not, ſince they are not with you!

"Briceval was in a fury: he ſwore that he would find his ſiſter again, and that he would be revenged on a traitor.—But where to find them?.....During the time that he travels, ſearches,

and ſeeks for information, an adventure happened to us that we might have foreſeen, and which commences the courſe of our long misfortunes.....But ſtop, Jeannette! what does Thereſa want with us?"

CHAPTER XXV.

Wherein many Heroes appear and disappear.

Here Madame Dericourt is interrupted by Therefa, who delivers a letter to Jeannette; Jeannette, would difcreetly put off the reading to another time: her mother prevails on her to fatisfy her curiofity immediately: it is without doubt a letter from Cecilia, from your dear friend?—No, Madame; I thought fo at firft, and my heart already palpitated with delightful expectation; but this letter is in a hand writing abfolutely unknown to me. With your permiffion, we will fee from whence it is addreffed to me.

Jeannette read aloud:

"Mademoiſelle, I am the landlady of the houſe you reſided at in Paris with Mademoiſelle Daſcourt...."

Jeannette broke off: Daſcourt, my dear mother, is the name that Mademoiſelle D'Eranville aſſumed in that houſe, not to expoſe that of her family, left a prey to indigence. Let us proceed:

"With Mademoiſelle Daſcourt. Excuſe me if I have the heart to afflict you by informing you of a ſhocking event....Your friend....She has not been able to receive or read either of your two letters. The very day of your departure....what do I ſay? it was in the evening, a guard came, charged with an order to carry off Mademoiſelle Daſcourt, to conduct her to a ſtate priſon. The guard and his followers have taken Mademoiſelle from me; they have torn her from my arms.......I am ignorant whither they have conducted her. Far

enough off without doubt; for they ſpoke of an hundred leagues at the leaſt....The next day I wiſhed to carry this news to Mr. de Verneuil, your friend, but he had ſet out on the long journey he had propoſed. An incident had haſtened his departure. I have not been able to find defenders for that young perſon, victim doubtleſs of ſome miſtake; for ſhe is ſo wiſe, ſo modeſt! ſhe is an angel that they perſecute!.... Pardon me, Mademoiſelle, if I have taken the liberty of breaking the ſeal of your laſt letter! but I could not leave you ignorant of the accident which has happened to your friend, and which muſt very much afflict your feeling heart!"

"I have the honour to be, &c.

FARE *widow* AUBRY."

We may eaſily judge of the ſtate Jeannette was in after the reading of

that fatal letter! Cecilia carried off by a guard!....Conducted they know not whither!....The ſame day of Jeannette's departure! ſhe had quitted her friend in the moment of misfortune!......And who then purſues her? Who are the barbarians?

Jeannette gave herſelf up to deſpair, and would have ſet off inſtantly to Paris. She muſt gain information of her friend, ſhe muſt find her again!..... Madame Dericourt employed all the ſtrength of her reaſon and prudence to calm her weeping daughter. She at length ſucceeded; but Jeannette ſtill perſiſted in her project of going to Paris. Madame Dericourt conſented to it, and would even accompany her thither; but the day is far advanced; and the journey muſt be put of until the next morning. How long did that delay appear to Jeannette, ſhe is compelled,

and muſt nevertheleſs ſubſcribe to it: Madame Dericourt perceiving that ſhe was ſomewhat conſoled, reſumed the thread of her narration in the following terms:

"My recital will not prove long, my dear child: and perhaps be very little intereſting to you at preſent; yet I believe you poſſeſs ſufficient fortitude to give a moment's truce to your grief: the misfortunes of your own family ought to affect you as much at leaſt as thoſe of your friends; and beſides it is of conſequence that I ſhould reveal to you the ſecret of your birth, to the end that you may afterwards ſubmit to what I expect from you.

"Felix and myſelf were then at Paris, happy, quiet, and more like lovers than a wedded pair, when one day that I was alone, I ſaw two officers enter the apartment, who, with an haughty

air, and without taking off their hats to me, asked me if that was the house of Monsieur Felix Dericourt?—Yes, gentlemen.—Is he at home?—He will return immediately.—We will wait for him.

"These two insolent men sat down, sneering; and staring at me, one said to the other; Is this the little lass they told us of? What do you say to her, Roland?—and you Octavius?—She is not amiss.—Yes, to gratify a whim.

"My countenance was suffused with blushes, and I was ready to faint away when Felix entered, who was struck with astonishment when he recollected his two brothers. Are you here? said he to them fiercely.—You see we are; we come to compliment you on your conquest: she is pretty; but doubtless you are not serious?—Very serious!.... and I desire you to cease, or to retire.—

Gently! we are charged with our father's order, who is with us at Paris, and who commands you to return home.—Is my father here?—He orders you to follow us.—Heavens! Never!... Which if you refuse, a good *Lettre de Cachet* will secure you and this girl for him.—Get out of my house, wicked men! Get out of my house. Go, and tell the barbarian that sent you, that no power on earth is able to break the knot that attaches me for ever to this inestimable woman.

"The brothers were about to reply; but another officer came in; and the sight of him increased my trouble and the confusion of Felix; it is Briceval himself!....

"This was a day for surprises. To tell you, Jeannette, how all these troublesome visitors had discovered our retirement, and met there by chance

at the ſame time, would be to enter into too trifling details, and which the probabilities of the events of life ought to make you readily conceive. Briceval then entered, and I exclaimed: My brother! Her brother, reſumed Roland Dericourt! what! is this the little plebeian, to whom the gentleman's mother gave exiſtence!—And this woman to be our ſiſter, added Octavius, foaming with rage!....

"Felix ſtood thunderſtruck, as well at the imprudence of his brothers, as at the unexpected appearance of his friend, whom he had betrayed. Briceval recollected Felix's brothers; he viewed them with indignation: then turning towards Felix, he ſaid to him mildly: is ſhe really your wife!—She is, replied Felix timidly.—'Tis well, I approve theſe ties, ſaid Briceval, and will aſſert them againſt every inſolent

perſon that dare gainſay them !—Let us go brother, interrupted Octavius ; let us leave theſe people to grow proud at the diſhonour of our family !....

"They went away, and Briceval, following them to the ſtair caſe, cried out to them: Gentlemen, I ſhall find you again another time!

"Briceval, being left alone with us, then addreſſed us with juſt reproaches ; but at laſt he grew calm: And why, ſaid he to us, why, ungrateful as you are, had you not ſufficient confidence to reveal your ſecret to me? Do you believe I would not have conſented to your happineſs ? and do you not know that I myſelf am ſenſible to love ?.... Know that I am ſo, as well as you, but in ſecret alſo, a huſband and a father ? Yes, I have a ſon two years old, and I have married a charming woman, but whoſe birth is ſtill more obſcure than

that of Rofella. You look at me Felix, and you can fcarce believe me; you, who feldom quitted me, who travelled with me, that I could have, during that time, fpun out an intrigue? Felix, the fame prejudice which engaged you to conceal your love for my fifter, compelled me to filence in regard to you; our hearts were worthy of a mutual underftanding, but they were filent?.... Come then to my arms, happy pair, whom, I love; come and embrace a man who is much more your friend than brother!...

We preffed this generous relation to both our hearts; and our happinefs was only troubled from the fears of Felix at the fole idea of his father being at Paris. He was ignorant of his addrefs; his brothers had departed without giving it to him: if he had known where to have found that irritated father, he would

have gone to throw himſelf at his feet, he would have endeavoured to have obtained his pardon: But where is he?—deceived by Octavius and Roland, he is capable of proceeding to the laſt extremities towards Felix, whom he never loved: what a ſituation!—

" Briceval paſſed the day with us, and at his departure my huſband found more courage and a greater fortitude in himſelf, to brave the ſtrokes of fate.

" The next morning we received the following dreadful note from Briceval.

" I am loſt, if I do not fly. Felix! yeſterday your two brothers, whom I met inſulted me: I challenged them, like cowards they jointly attacked me! I brought one to the ground and dangerouſly wounded the other: they cried out murder; and I had juſt time to ſave myſelf. I am ſetting off, I know not whither; I fear the utmoſt from

their father's vengeance: try to get out of the way; for in his despair, he is capable of every thing. Adieu!...."

This fatal news deprived me of my senses!—I was with child and I brought you into the world, my dear daughter, a month before the time prescribed for your birth!—Judge of the embarrassment of my husband! he caused his daughter to be suddenly baptized, and returned home; but, oh, what an increase of grief! the house is full of archers! a guard shews Felix a *lettre de cachet*.—They ask for the husband, the wife, and even the child!....

The whole forms a dreadful confusion and uproar!....My husband forms a violent resolution; he writes a letter, tears it in halves, and gives one of them to Ferrand his domestic. Take this paper, said he with so low a voice that I could not hear him; carry it

with the infant to the foundling hoſpital: it is the only aſylum I can give it againſt the rage of its perſecutors; perhaps we may ſome day find it again!....

"Ferrand eſcaped ſecretly with the innocent babe; he run like a madman; but in the court before the church of Notre Dame, he imagines that he is purſued: fear takes poſſeſſion of his ſenſes: he has not ſtrength ſufficient to reach the hoſpital, and depoſits the infant and the paper in the firſt alley he finds open. He goes out of it like a perſon out of his ſenſes, returns to his maſter's houſe, finds that he is carried off by the officers of juſtice, ſaves himſelf for ever by leaving the houſe and returning to his own country, here, near to Chartres, where he relates all theſe events to his brother Jacques.

"In fact, ſcarcely had Ferrand gone

out, than my hufband was dragged away by the guard and his followers: he could only cry out to me: Rofella, Rofella! do not be uneafy about your daughter fhe is in fafety: Some day....

"He could fay no more to me: fo that I was for a long time ignorant what had become of my child!....

"What a fhock to a woman who had juft brought a child into the world! I remained a long time in all the madnefs of defpair; and without doubt, had I not been in that cruel ftate for which my tormentors evinced fome degree of pity, the monfters would have made me partake the fame hard lot as my hufband. I owed my recovery to the care of fome charitable neighbours; and when I recovered my reafon, I learned, by a letter from my hufband, that he was confined at Saint Lazare, by his father's power, who had

obtained the unjuſt and barbarous order. My huſband wrote to me that all his letters were previouſly read, and that he could give me no other details, than thoſe which they permitted him to tranſmit to me. He informed me that he was ignorant of the aſylum where Briceval had hid himſelf; that Roland, whom he had killed, died on the ſpot; but that Octavius, who was only wounded, had accuſed him of aſſaſſination. Their father had inſtituted a criminal proceſs, for contumacy, againſt the pretended aſſaſſin, and conſidering the rank of Mr. Dericourt and his protectors, furniſhed every reaſon to believe that he would obtain a degrading ſentence againſt Briceval and his family......

"My huſband did not tell me, where he had placed his daughter in the exceſs of his deſpair: he thought, with-

out doubt, that I had known her aſylum from Ferrand, who he preſumed was always with me: but that domeſtic had diſappeared from the very day of our misfortune, and I was plunged into the moſt cruel ignorance concerning the lot of my child. I anſwered Felix: but my letter never reached him, and they carried their cruelty to ſo great an extreme, that they intercepted all his. I was informed alſo, that it was dangerous for me to remain in Paris. From that time I was aſſiſted by that rare bleſſing, a friend; a lady, who poſſeſſed ſome moderate rents and ſome few lands in Picardy, and I ſettled with her in the environs of Amiens. I hoped ſome day to obtain the liberty of my huſband, and I ſought for protections every where: but alas! where can innocence find them?

Four years elapſed, at the end of

which period I learned the death of my husband's father. This old gentleman, for some time, seemed to have abandoned the process which he carried on against the contumacious Briceval. They also informed me that this last, more tranquil concerning the consequences of the process, had returned to Paris, where he resided near the suburbs of Saint Germain, with his only son; for he had lost his wife. I then returned myself to Paris, where I did every thing in my power to discover my brother: but all my inquiries were fruitless: and how in fact is any one to be found who conceals himself in that great city!....

I took fresh steps to obtain the liberty of Felix, and at last I succeeded; but woeful to relate! Felix, pressed down under the weight of his misfortune, was in no condition to profit by it.

An incurable diſtemper conducted him inſenſibly to the tomb; and at the inſtant I was going to ſnatch him from his priſon, I received from him the following letter, the laſt words he had been able to trace :

"I am informed, my dear Roſella, that my father is dead, and that my brother Octavius has taken poſſeſſion of all his property. I am alſo aſſured that you can break my chains....Oh my loved wife! how can I inform you of the fatal blow which is about to ſtrike me! Preſerve, O preſerve your cares for our child whom you may yet draw out again from her melancholy aſylum...... I die, I expire, my dear Roſella, and when you ſhall have received this letter, perhaps your huſband will have ceaſed to exiſt!......I die, my deareſt friend, a victim to love ; and above all, a victim to the rigour of a deceived fa-

ther......Alas! he expects one; and it is only in the other world that he will know the heart of his fon........Adieu, Rofella, adieu for ever."

"This letter was like a thunder-bolt to me. I flew to the prifon, where they informed me that I had loft my hufband....In my grief I would have gone and have loaded the infamous Octavius with my reproaches. I was prevented; but the perfons who managed my affairs compelled that covetous brother to reftore one half of his father's inheritance. He was conftrained to do it, and revenged himfelf, by renewing the criminal procefs which his father had inftituted againft my brother: Octavius had difcovered Briceval's retreat in Paris. The latter faved himfelf, and efcaped a fecond time from the fnares which his enemy had laid for him: but, alas! Octavius gained his fuit, and

Briceval, though abſent, was condemned to an infamous exit!....

"I ſhall ſpare you, Jeannette, the detail of the tears which I ſhed when I learned theſe melancholy tidings. I was then in the country. Briceval, who from the noiſe which my ſuit with Octavius had occaſioned, had diſcovered my retreat, came to viſit me there with his ſon, who was then about ſix years and an half old. We wept a long time together; and it was at this period that Julius de Briceval, the elder brother of the unfortunate, returned from the Weſt Indies, poſſeſſor of a conſiderable fortune. The public voice had acquainted him with our misfortunes, and the diſgrace which an unjuſt condemnation had ſhed upon his name. He came to ſee me, ſcolded at firſt; but when convinced of his brother's innocence, he conſoled him, and ſwore

he would draw down vengeance on his enemy. Briceval could not ſurvive his ſhame. We loſt him in my houſe; he expired with grief in my arms, after having requeſted as a laſt favour, that, if we ſhould ever find again my daughter, Jeanne Victoire Dericourt, ſhe ſhould be united to his ſon, he gave an order to the ſame purpoſe to this young child who was kneeling near his bed, and Briceval expired in the perſuaſion that a proſperous day would arrive, which would reſtore my daughter back again to me, and that I would then make amends for all the evils my clandeſtine marriage had cauſed him, by uniting theſe two children of misfortune!....

"As ſoon as his eyes were cloſed, Julius, my elder brother, undertook the education of the young Briceval, his nephew; he took the boy with

him; and to avoid the ſcandal with which his name was tainted, he changed it, gave a ſuppoſititious one to the child, and took him to travel along with him. Thus, I remained alone a prey to my grief and my complaints! An event increaſed my fortune; Octavius, that baſe brother of my huſband, was killed in a duel; (I have always ſuſpected that it was Julius in order to revenge Briceval;) and my marriage giving me the right of ſucceſſion, I found myſelf heireſs to the whole fortune of the Dericourts. I was rich, Jeannette, but always unhappy. I was ignorant of what could have become of my daughter....My huſband was dead, and had not in reality diſcovered the aſylum where ſhe was concealed...... However, two years after, more or leſs, I came to reſide in this city, when a man, pale and emaciated, came one

day to throw himſelf at my feet: Alas! cried he, is it Madame Dericourt that I behold! ah! you are going to relieve my heart, overcharged, from a long time back, with the weight of a moſt excruciating remorſe.......Deign to recollect Ferrand, Madame, formerly ſervant to your huſband, he to whom, in a dreadful moment, he intruſted your newly born infant!....

I was much affected, and interrogated the man; he informed me of the abandoning of my daughter! I ran to Paris: I enquired at the Foundling Hoſpital. They informed me that they had confided my child to the care of two married perſons, whoſe name and addreſs they gave me. I flew to M. D'Eranville's houſe; they knew not what had become of him, neither of his wife, his daughter, nor of that ſame

Jeannette, the orphan, brought up by them, and well known to thoſe of whom I enquired. All that family is ruined, ſaid they to me, and plunged in misfortune; and there is every reaſon to believe that it has quitted Paris!....Judge of my grief, Jeannette; I returned hither: Ferrand no longer exiſted: but Jacques, his brother, informed me that an ex-religeuſe had been at his houſe, and told him that ſhe knew my daughter. I ſcolded the man for not having obtained further information. At laſt I grew more reſigned; and waited till ſome lucky circumſtance ſhould reſtore you to my love, and Heaven has at laſt deigned to grant me that favour!....

Behold, Jeannette, the ſecret of your birth, and the melancholy recital of the misfortunes of your mother....Another

opportunity you ſhall know what it is ſhe expects from your gentleneſs of diſpoſition, and delicacy of ſentiment..... It is late, Jeannette; to-morrow we muſt travel, I put off until another day the details which I ought to give you, before I preſcribe my will to you.

CHAPTER XXVI.

We ſee many ſimilar Marriages.

JEANNETTE, from one circumſtance in her mother's recital, foreſaw the aim of the orders ſhe was going to preſcribe to her: but ſhe paid but little attention to it at the moment. Affected by the rapid and ſingular events which had been deſcribed to her, moved with the remembrance of her friend Cecilia, victim, without doubt, to an arbitrary order, Jeannette could think of no object during the night but the unfortunate D'Eranville. She aroſe, dreſſed herſelf in haſte, and went to rejoin her mother, whom ſhe found ready. Let

us depart, my dear daughter, ſaid Madame Dericourt; let us loſe no time, for we muſt return back again to-morrow: for the day after I expect company, (ſhe ſmiled,) relations that you will doubtleſs be charmed to know.

Jeannette and her mother got into the poſt chaiſe, which flew to Paris, where they arrived a little before night. They went immediately to Cecilia's lodgings, where they learned from the mouth of the landlady, the ſame intelligence that ſhe had before notified to them by letter. Madame Aubry knew no more. Jeannette cauſed her to repeat the circumſtances of the carrying her friend off: ſhe learned that Cecilia had exclaimed, when ſhew as following the guard: Ah! Jeannette!... why art not thou a witneſs to the misfortunes of thy friend!....

Jeannette ſhed tears, and retired in deſpair: the next morning ſhe ran with her mother to the houſes of ſeveral magiſtrates; they were ignorant, or feigned to be ignorant, of the lot of Cecilia; and in the afternoon, after having exhauſted every means of information the mother and the daughter departed once more for Chartres, where grief and regret purſued them.

Madame Dericourt employed a thouſand methods to calm the grief of her daughter; ſhe could only benumb her feelings for a while: Jeannette remained inconſolable. The next day after their return, Madame Dericourt addreſſed Jeannette in theſe words:

"My daughter, my dear Jeannette, you have ſeen that I have done all in my power to aſſiſt you in your reſearches: I have complied even with your ſlighteſt wiſhes; they prove your

gratitude to thofe from whom you have received favours: they cannot fail being pleafing to me. At prefent, my dear child, when I do not poffefs a fingle hope to difcover the traces of your friend, leave all to time; act like your mother, who has paffed twenty-eight years far from her daughter, hopelefs of ever finding her again, and who neverthelefs obtained that favour from Heaven. There is in life, Jeannette, events fo extraordinary, that all human prudence can neither calculate nor prevent. Thofe only who have not met with my trials, doubt the caprices of fortune: both of us have experienced them, Jeannette, and we are prepared for every event, in order that we fhould not be furprifed!..:.. Oh! that! my dear Jeannette, I muft fpeak to you on another fubject.

"I told you, I believe, that Julius

de Briceval had carried his young nephew with him to America; but that nephew is no longer an infant: he is at preſent a young man thirty years of age, tall, well-made, and very amiable. Julius and his nephew have taken advantage of the new laws to annul the unjuſt ſentence given formerly againſt Briceval; and they have ſucceeded in reinſtating his memory: in conſequence of which they have reaſumed their real names, and it is them that I expect to day. I was reading the letter that gave me that aſſurance, at the ſame moment when Barnard came to inform me that I was going to embrace my daughter...... Jeannette, I recommend this young man to you; recall to mind that his father was unhappy only becauſe he approved my union with thine. Recollect that Briceval, on his death-bed,

commanded his ſon to give his hand to you: and that I promiſed him your conſent to that marriage, and that thus, from infancy, young Briceval and yourſelf are deſtined to become man and wife. Have you not yourſelf told me that in the houſe of M. D'Eranville you called the little Briceval *your little huſband?* Happy preſentiment of the tender tie by which you were one day to be united! He is coming Jeannette; he knows, as well as his uncle, that I have had the happineſs to find you again; I informed them of that pleaſing news by an expreſs that I ſent to meet them. I require of you, my dear child, that you will accuſtom yourſelf from this very day, to regard that young man as your future huſband......Jeannette, you return me no anſwer? your heart is free; you have aſſured me of it?—Dear mother, it is

true; but is his heart the ſame?....My nephew's, oh! I will anſwer for his heart; I never have heard ſay, that he had given it to another. Be eaſy on that point......Well, ſhall I have any difficulty in obtaining from you the promiſe which I deſire?—Madame.... I have always ſhunned the bands of hymen. It is, however, the aim of every virtuous and modeſt woman.— At my age, Madame, at twenty-eight years old! it is rather late.—You will be the better judge of the happineſs of the conjugal ſtate.—What! ſcarcely have I the felicity to embrace my dear mother, than ſhe preſſes me to ſeparate myſelf from her!—Never, no, my dear child, never will I quit you, nor your huſband. We will live together; and perhaps before I die, I ſhall have the happineſs to ſee you a mother in your turn. Oh! give me that ſatisfaction?

—Madame permit me to object to you ....—Jeannette, remember then that I am engaged by an oath to a dying man, whose last will ought to be respected. I shall feel pain, my dear daughter, to use the rights I have over you; and it would be in the utmost extremity that I will take upon myself to say to you: I insist upon it, I will have it so.

Jeannette seized her mother's hand, which she covered with kisses. Dearest mother, said she to her, your expectation shall not be frustrated. So much goodness pierces me to the heart; yes, I will obey you: Never so little as I may be inclined to marriage, if my cousin does not displease me too much. I......I will marry him.—Oh! he will please you: he is such a delightful gentleman. He also knows that in you he will see his wife; and he is enchanted with the idea.—Assure your-

ſelf then, Madame, of your daughter's ſubmiſſion; but Cecilia, Madame, Cecilia!....Is it at the moment when friendſhip is drowned in tears, that I muſt light up the torch of hymen!

Then her tears began afreſh to flow. ....—The good Madame Dericourt haſtened to dry them up; ſhe embraced her daughter, who was grown a little more calm, when Meſſieurs Briceval were announced.

At that name Jeannette ſtarted. She ſaw an old man enter; he was very fat and ſhort, but briſk, and of a merry countenance. Behold the uncle ſaid Jeannette to herſelf: as to the nephew, he appeared to her far above the praiſes which Madame Dericourt had beſtowed upon him. Tall, well made, endowed with all the graces, and of an excellent voice, his looks alone immediately decided Jeannette in favour of

the projected marriage. Here we are, my dear ſiſter, ſaid the uncle to Madame Dericourt; but is that my neice, Jeannette, the child of an unfortunate brother?—You ſee her, dear brother.—Briceval, purſued the uncle; hold, my friend, look then at your couſin. Is ſhe amiable, hey?...Odds bobs you are going to be a happy man! but why do you ſtand looking at her there? Embrace her, then, ſimpleton? At your age was it neceſſary that I ſhould be told theſe things?....—Dear uncle, replied the young man mildly, that is a favour that ought to be merited, before it ſhould be dared even to be aſked.—I am charmed, interrupted Madame Dericourt, that you think my daughter amiable: but her charms are nothing in compariſon to the virtues of her heart. How happy will he be, who ſhall poſſeſs a wife ſo intereſting!

Briceval ſighed, and lifted up his eyes to Heaven. His uncle, his aunt, and Jeannette herſelf, were perſuaded in themſelves that that ſigh was the effect of the idea of the happineſs he was about to enjoy. But you are very well, dear brother, ſaid Madame Dericourt to the big Julius; I think you have got fatter in the few months you were away; how does that come about?—'Pſhaw! dear ſiſter don't mention it, I am juſt come from wearying myſelf at the country houſe of a ſilly woman who had deſired me to direct ſome buildings carrying on there. My nephew during that time reſided at her houſe in Paris. I made my young man come to me: but as ſoon as I knew that the miſtreſs of the houſe followed him I ſet off in a twinkling, and here I am—always merry, always the ſame? —What would you have more, my

dear ſiſter, I have loſt my dignities, my croſs, and a part of my fortune; well, I conſole myſelf by thinking that all thoſe things are doubtleſs for the general welfare, and I always laugh and drink.—You do right: I have viſited my cellar purpoſely on your account; I have laid aſide ſuch wine!.....So much the better; that ſeems like a loving ſiſter. I am of opinion that we ought to examine them directly?—Willingly; with all my heart.

Madame Dericourt rung the bell; the breakfaſt was brought in; and whilſt the uncle drank and laughed, Jeannette and her couſin timidly regarded each other without daring to ſpeak a ſingle word. In the mean time it ſeemed to Jeannette that ſhe had ſeen that young man in ſome place; and on his part, Briceval was not aſſured but that he had met Jeannette in ſome

company or other. They reciprocally communicated this doubt, and could not divine where they had ſeen each other. As to the reſt, Jeannette was enchanted with her couſin, although he appeared a little cold and melancholy. On his ſide, Briceval thought his couſin very amiable, and theſe young perſons very ſoon appeared to underſtand each other very well.

Julius and Madame Dericourt are enchanted to ſee their children reunited. The day paſſed in reciprocal congratulations, and every body is content. Every body!......Should I thus claſs under a general head that ſatisfaction which did not ſparkle equally upon every countenance!.....Briceval is melancholy; he is civil, and was gallant with his couſin; but does he feel for her as much tenderneſs as ſhe begins to experience for him?......

Jeannette was alſo thinking inceſ-

ſantly on her friend, and that ſole remembrance troubled the pleaſure ſhe ought to have enjoyed at a change of condition ſo happy for her. However the diſſipation, the idea of her marriage, the tender conſolations of her mother, all gave ſome diverſion to her grief, and a month ſlid away in feaſts, in pleaſures, in preparations for the wedding; for all is arranged and decided between the relations and the young folks. Two words were ſufficient between them: Couſin, I only perform my duty by complying with my mother's wiſhes.—My dear couſin, the command of my father is ſtill freſh in my memory. This is what Jeannette and Briceval ſaid to each other. Briceval has often ſecret conferences with his uncle; and always comes out from them with the tears ſtanding in his eyes, whilſt the brow of the old gentleman

is wrinkled with anger. What can be the ſubject of their ſecret converſations? Jeannette puts that queſtion to her mother; her mother is as ignorant of the matter as herſelf. Madame Dericourt ſpeaks of it to Julius Briceval: Julius anſwers that 'tis nothing, but ſome reproaches he has made his nephew, in reſpect to ſome of his former youthful tricks, and that's all.

A final arrangement is made. It is decided that the marriage of the young couple ſhould take place at Chartres, and that afterwards they ſhould all go together to Paris to paſs the winter, where Madame Dericourt had ſome property. That loving mother was charmed at the idea of enabling her children to enjoy the pleaſures which that great city offers at that ſeaſon of the year. Jeannette was beſides going to appear there in a moſt brilliant man-

ner, and ſhe was to enjoy all the privileges of her dignity and fortune. Madame Dericourt, in favour of that marriage, had endowed her daughter with two or three farms and a good eſtate. She has beſides an hotel at Paris: Jeannette is rich beyond her wiſhes, and yet Jeannette is not content. During the ſilence of the night, fatigued with the different pleaſures ſhe had taſted during the day, ſhe ſays to herſelf: Whilſt I enjoy all the conveniences of life, my friend ſuffers, and weeps perhaps in the gloomy horrors of a priſon! Ungrateful that I am! ſtunned with a chaos of viſits, entirely confined in the ſociety of my relations, who leave me not a moment of repoſe, I forget Cecilia! Cecilia, to whom I have promiſed an eternal friendſhip, whom I ought to find again, whom I only quitted with the proſpect of mitigating

her misfortune! Cecilia, ſhe is raviſh-ed from me! She perhaps accuſes Jean-nette, and can Jeannette tear herſelf away from the arms of thoſe to whom ſhe is ſo dear, to go to ſeek her friend? Where? Where good heavens? Unjuſt and barbarous fate, have you ſeparated us for ever? Shall I never ſee you again, friend of my infancy, Cecilia, that I would now make ſo happy? But what am I ſaying? from henceforth ſhe ne-ver can be ſo: far from her lover, far from her ſon, Cecilia......Let us hide the fatal ſecret for ever: may this fault of my friend never eſcape from her heart or mine. Let us not cover her name with the ſeal of diſhonour: ſhe ſuffers already ſufficiently, unfortunate woman!....

This was frequently the nature of Jeannette's thoughts in reſpect to Ce-cilia; but ſhe was going to Paris; and

the entertainments of that brilliant abode occupied her imagination much lefs, than the defire of feeking after Cecilia, of gaining information concerning her, and perhaps of fucceeding in procuring tidings of her. It appeared to her, that in the place where Cecilia had formerly dwelt, Jeannette would have lefs pains to meet her again. Then fhe inwardly promifed to vifit the magiftrates, to employ every poffible refource to find her, and to break her fetters, if fhe was ftill loaded with them. This was the fole motive which made Jeannette defirous of undertaking the journey to Paris.

In regard to her marriage, as it had been contracted, refolved, and decided from her infancy by her relations at the death-bed of Briceval, Jeannette neither retarded nor hindered it. She neverthelefs perceived that fhe loved

Briceval better than any other man, and the wedding in her eyes wore a lovely aſpect. Briceval on his ſide, appeared to act from the ſame principles; he ſeemed to fulfil a promiſe, and to demonſtrate neither love nor repugnance. His behaviour was civil; but more clear-ſighted eyes than thoſe of Jeannette would have perceived that he reſigned himſelf, and that he was tormented with ſome ſecret chagrin; nevertheleſs he did not complain, and his uncle was, without doubt, the only perſon who poſſeſſed his confidence. Madame Dericourt, blinded by the exceſs of her happineſs, after ſo many misfortunes, believed, or was willing to believe, that the young folks mutually adored each other. She made the ſmalleſt civilities of Briceval to appear of conſequence in the eyes of Jeannette: and to the latter, the ſlighteſt expreſſi-

ons of Jeannette were interpreted as proofs of love; ſo that the young couple were married, perſuaded that they were both of them two amorous fools.

Thus the marriage was celebrated, as many others which we frequently ſee, with ſufficient indifference, and as an affair of calculation and contract. Some days after, the day of their departure for Paris was determined; the day arrived, but the old Julius, confined by his gout, would not accompany his family. He even inſiſted that they ſhould make him a promiſe before they ſet out, to return ſoon back to him. He was conſequently left to the care of Bernard and other intelligent domeſtics; then Madame Dericourt and her two children departed to go and inhabit this elegant hotel, which the mother had ceded to her daughter.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A husband like unto many.

LET us take up our residence with our friends in their elegant abode, situate in University Street, and let us enjoy our share of the blustering pleasures they are about to taste. Forthwith Briceval, who his uncle (who was immensely rich as we have before observed,) had also endowed on his part, gave his wife a carriage, servants, furniture of the newest fashion, and elegant dresses made in the first style. Jeannette, (shall we still make use of that name?) Madame Briceval, possessed the finest diamonds, every thing

ſhe could wiſh, and it ſeemed as if her huſband made it a point to anticipate her ſlighteſt wiſhes; but this huſband ſo generous, ſo great in all his actions, confined the proofs of his love within thoſe limits; he was always ſad and melancholy; and when his wife teazed him about miſanthrophy, he ſighed, roſe up, and left the room. Jeannette ſoon perceived that her huſband only entertained an eſteem for her, and that even a very cool one: ſhe communicated the afflicting remark to her mother; you certainly dream, my dera child: I can perceive nothing of all this. Your huſband behaves very well, and the little attentions he is paying to you inceſſantly, are, I think, ſufficient proofs of his regard.

Jeannette believed her mother, and accommodated herſelf by little and little to the character of her huſband, who

ſhe found in all other reſpects always civil, delicate, and eager to pleaſe her.

Notwithſtanding the rapid career of the revolution, the winter of that year was very agreeable, and offered a thouſand varied pleaſures. All theſe pleaſures were new to Jeannette, and which ſhe had never before enjoyed. The concerts of the Theatre Faydeau above all afforded her the moſt ſingular delight: ſhe was not much of a muſician, but ſhe loved muſic; and, ſince her marriage ſhe ſtudied it with ardour. The celebrated Garat appeared to her to be the beſt of ſingers. Heavens! ſaid ſhe to her huſband, what taſte does that young man poſſeſs! and with what ſpirit he improves every thing that he ſings! Madame W— no doubt has alſo talents; but ſhe has not ſufficient aſſurance in what ſhe ſings; her freſh and delicious voice trembles, and her

timidity ſeems to ſtifle all her powers.—It is a pity. Madame, replied Briceval; for it is hardly poſſible to poſſeſs a more affecting and a more melodious voice. If you wiſh to hear her, my dear love, I have the honour to know her; we will contrive a little concert, and you will find that in a ſaloon ſhe will appear quite another perſon.

Madame Briceval was enchanted with the party propoſed to her by her huſband. A day was appointed. Briceval undertook the invitations, and a brilliant and numerous ſociety embelliſhes his new fête for Jeannette. They preſſed her to ſing; ſhe ſung without farther entreaty, and a celebrated Italian compoſer accompanied her on the piano forte. Her graces, her talents, and her amiable character, totally engroſſed the whole converſation

of the company. Briceval remarked that his wife was the ſubject of the general attention, and his natural ſelf love was flattered by it.

This charming evening was the prelude to others at the houſes of the ſtrangers whom they had invited, and Jeannette was thus launched into ſociety. Balls ſucceeded, then invitations to drink tea, a new faſhion adopted in France from the cuſtom of their neighbours, and the winter glided away in this manner with Jeannette in entertainments and pleaſures of all kinds. In every place ſhe was, if not the youngeſt, at leaſt the moſt amiable and the moſt agreeable. Her huſband was fond of ſhining in the world; and Jeannette, who, like the reſt of her ſex, was no enemy to coquetry, availed herſelf of it without abaſing it. Her mother accompanied her every where, and that

eſtimable woman enjoyed with heart-felt delight the praiſes which were laviſhed on her daughter.

In the mean time the preference yielded to Jeannette by the men, and in all the polite circles, excited the jealouſy of the female ſex. It was ſoon whiſpered that ſhe was no great things, a poor girl, very honeſtly brought up in the foundling hoſpital, and afterwards adopted through charity: they even ſpread the report that one of her uncles had merited a defamatory ſentence for a crime which they exaggerated, and ſhortly after the poor Jeannette ſaw herſelf the object of malicious glances and Sardonic ſmiles. She learned the cauſe; and her reaſon, repreſſing her deſires for the enjoyment of it, ſhe ſuddenly renounced all company. It was then that the remembrance of Cecilia returned with increaſed bit-

ternefs : fhe had never ceafed thinking on her ; fhe had even made fome vague inquiries: but, hurried along in the vortex of diverfions, fhe had not been able, as fhe had projected, to occupy herfelf entirely in her friend's concern. She promifed within herfelf not to neglect any thing that might tend to difcover the leaft traces of her.

Briceval, on his part, always a prey to his gloomy melancholy, had given himfelf up to fociety only for the fake of his wife, for whom he poffeffed a great efteem and a fincere attachment. He was tranfported to fee that, of her own accord, fhe withdrew her company from thofe palling and debauched circles into which at firft fhe had heedleflly thrown herfelf. A melancholy piece of intelligence came, which ftill further ftrengthened their mutual tafte for folitude. Their old uncle Ju-

lius, whom his gout had ſtopped all the winter in the houſe of his ſiſter at Chartres, had lately died there. This circumſtance, which afflicted Madame Dericourt much more than Briceval, recalled our friends back to Chartres. Briceval was ſole heir to that uncle, who had brought him up; it was neceſſary for him to travel to ſeveral places in order to gather the fruits of his inheritance, and more eſpecially make a voyage to America, where he poſſeſſed extenſive plantations.

In conſequence, Briceval, perceiving that the ſpring promiſed a very fine ſummer, reſolved no longer to delay his voyage to the Weſt Indies; a voyage which would keep him at leaſt ſix months abſent from home. Jeannette experienced a real chagrin on thinking that ſhe muſt be ſeparated ſo long from her huſband: but, determined to paſs

that fatal time in company with her mother, ſhe placed a perſon to take care of her hotel in Paris, and followed Madame Dericourt, who was deſirous to finiſh the remainder of her days in her houſe at Chartres. However, theſe two lonely and melancholy ladies were to have their ſociety agreeably increaſed, and in a manner they were very far from expecting.

Some days before his departure, Briceval, who appeared more and more ſad and full of care, diſappeared without ſaying a word to any body, and did not return till the ſecond morning after, to the great ſatisfaction of his wife, who had been very much diſquieted by his abſence.

Briceval deſcends from his carriage, and holds in his arms a young child, handſome as Cupid, at the moſt four years old. My dear wife, ſaid he to

Jeannette, who had eagerly preſſed forward to meet him, hitherto Heaven has not decreed whether you ſhould be a mother, be ſo from this moment! Yes, deign to ſupply the place of a mother to this poor child, for whom I intereſt myſelf.......very much! I ſaw him born; I knew his mother, his unfortunate mother, whom he has loſt for ever: Jeannette, if you will do a thing agreeable to your huſband, it will be to bring up this child as your own: I promiſed his parents that I would never abandon him, to equal their tenderneſs for him! Alas! he will never know them!—Ah what, my love! replied Jeannette, this child is an orphan, and you condeſcend to be as a father to him! Why did you conceal it from me till now? Why did you not tell it me ſooner?.....I could not, my dear. I was ignorant myſelf that this child might ſome day enter

my houſe. He received.....then.....the careſſes of his father.—Who is apparently no more? Was it a man in eaſy circumſtances?—An unfortunate——An indigent perſon whom you protected?—That I loved........as myſelf. In fine, Jeannette, let it ſuffice you to know that I am intereſted in it: take this infant; may he ſoften the tedious hours of my abſence, and may I at my return ſee you partaking the affection I have vowed for him?—Make no doubt of it, my dear friend! What a pretty little fellow he is! What is his name? Ha, ha....Yes, his name?. Is it in fact eſſential for you to know it.....His name is.....Auguſtus.—Auguſtus! well, may he be as dear to me as to you! What age? four years old or thereabouts, is it not ſo? That is the ſame age at which I was formerly received into the family of M. D'Eranville, by a bene-

factor equally generous and feeling. Let us render to this orphan, the same cares as were then lavished on my forlorn infancy: yes, let us now do for him what was formerly done for the poor Jeannette. My dear child! I was in your condition, and like you I found a new family, and protectors. Be my child from this moment, and may never those whom Heaven may be pleased to send me make any alteration in the tenderness which I ought to shew you, till I see you settled in the world. My dear Briceval, this is quite a treat that you have given me.

Briceval looked at his wife with such a lively concern, that a tear fell from his eyelids. He then took hold of the hands of Jeannette, and squeezing them in his own, said to her, with a stifled tone of voice, you are a most excellent wife!.......

He embraced the little Auguſtus, bid adieu to his wiſe and his mother-in-law, and departed for his long voyage. Madame Briceval was at firſt afflicted at taking leave of her huſband, whom ſhe was going to loſe for ſo long a time; but ſoon, when ſhe came to think that he would write to her often, and haſten his affairs, as he had promiſed her, ſhe delivered herſelf entirely to the careſſes which the child merited. She however aſked Madame Dericourt if ſhe had ever heard her nephew ſpeak of this child and his family? Never, replied her mother; that was the firſt time I ſaw him or ever heard his name. If my brother was alive he could doubtleſs ſet us right in that point; for as he accompanied his nephew every where, he muſt certainly have known his friends and connections. It is without

doubt the ſon of ſome domeſtic, of ſome indigent perſon whom he has relieved; for your huſband, my dear, has a moſt excellent heart! Oh, the beſt of hearts!—He muſt nevertheleſs have been much intereſted for the parents of this child; for he ſaid ſo!......He looked at Auguſtus with ſo tender an air!.... his heart beat violently, and I even remarked that his eyes were moiſtened with tears.—It was becauſe thoſe people were apparently very unfortunate!-- I have heard my brother ſay, that your huſband, even whilſt they were travelling, went to ſuccour the indigent even to their truckle beds, and into the lofts which they inhabited. Ah! he is a man, and a man that you ought to be perfectly happy with, Jeannette, as you have complied with my deſires in marrying ſuch a gentleman?—Quite happy, my dear mother, perfectly hap-

py! and Heaven has recompenced that docility which was due to you.

Jeannette clasped her mother to her bosom, and very soon these two friends turned all their attention to the child, who appeared timid and under constraint when in their presence: Augustus, said Jeannette to him, come hither?—My name is not Augustus said the child timidly, my name is Charles.—Hey! what is that he says, demands Jeannette of her mother?—Very well, replied Madame Dericourt, Augustus or Charles, it is indifferent which: in all likelihood he has two names, Charles Augustus. Tell me my little man, what was your papa's name?—My papa?....I have got no papa.—Yes, he is dead? And your mama?—Nor a mama neither.—Poor orphan! Do you know their names?—*(The child makes no answer.)* He has

forgot them; perhaps they have been dead a long time. And who has had the care of you till the preſent time?—My nurſe.—Where does ſhe live?—*(The child is ſilent.)*—You put him queſtions, interrupted Jeannette, to which it is impoſſible he ſhould anſwer at his tender age; is it poſſible we can remember? It is true, that at four years of age, myſelf, I remembered all that I ſaw at the hoſpital, even the names of my little comrades. Come, let me queſtion him in my turn.

Jeannette took the child upon her knees: You know very well, is it not ſo, the gentleman that brought you here?—M. Briceval? he is my good friend.—Did you ſee him often?—Oh, very often: he always brought me ſomething nice, and then he kiſſed me: Oh, I love him very well.—What, he uſed to go to your nurſe's houſe?—Yes,

where there was a little miſchevious boy, who was always pinching me, and the great dog bit me in going to take my part: my friend, who was there, thought I was hurt, and he was taken ill.—He was..... taken ill?—Yes, he cried, ſaying I was dead: and that he had loſt me! and I, I ſaid, no my dear friend, I am not loſt, here I am!

Jeannette bluſhed and grew pale ſucceſſively. Her mother perceived her trouble. What ails you, my child? —Nothing, dear mother.....But it is becauſe....Pardon me if I communicate to you a ſuſpicion, which may be unfounded, that ariſes in my heart?—Speak?—This child, that he be my huſband's?—Oh, no, interrupted the child, he is not my papa; for he has often forbid me to call him ſo.—Do you hear, dear mother?...—What folly, Jeannette! would your huſband be

capable to preſent to you......to introduce into your houſe......Go, ſay no more about it. I have too much eſteem for him to ſuppoſe him ſo very indelicate.

Madame Dericourt wiſhed to prove to her daughter that ſhe was in the wrong; but nothing could deſtroy ſuch very natural ſuſpicions, and Jeannette determined to keep them to herſelf.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A great Effect from a little Cause.

JEANNETTE being alone, reflected. My husband said she to herself is a worthy man, but he is an oddity. That man never related to me what he had been, what had happened to him before he married me: he has travelled a great deal with his uncle, and he has never spoken to me of his voyages. Not a single anecdote, not the least secret had come out of his mouth! His friends, his simple acquaintances, has he even told me the names of the men or women whom he had known before me?—Every time that I questioned

him concerning his former connections, he has kept the knowledge to himself, and turned the conversation upon other subjects, and I have not known any thing. He has always treated me with esteem, with regard: but has he ever loved me?....what I call loved....with passion? No. He appeared to me only to yield to a promise, to propriety, and not to the feelings of his heart. He is always gloomy, always melancholy. If he has loved another! if this child.... What a misfortune that the weakness of his age hindered him from remembering the names of his parents, of the towns or villages where he had been brought up! it seems as if he had known and seen only his nurse and M. Briceval, *his good friend*, who had forbidden him to call him *papa!*....Oh men! you accuse us of perfidy and dissimulation: has he not given a strong

inſtance of the like, by introducing his own ſon into my houſe, a child of illicit love! Be it ſo; I ſhould much rather have preferred his telling me ſo: yes, I ſhould have preferred his avowal of the whole circumſtances: my dear Jeannette, before I knew you, before you had any claims upon my heart, upon my fidelity, I felt the power of love; hold, there is my child, his mother is no longer in exiſtence; ſtand in her place, and be ſo generous as to ſuffer in your houſe an infant who is not your own!....If he had ſaid ſo to me, I ſhould have anſwered in embracing him: My dear friend, your confidence does me honour; it proves that you know how to do me juſtice: I cannot bear you any ill-will for a weakneſs that I could neither foreſee, nor could have prevented: I adopt your ſon; let him become mine, and may my tenderneſs to-

wards him make you forget his mother, by transferring to me all the love ſhe had inſpired you with!....But I am compoſing a Romance! Oh Briceval!

Thus argued the poor Jeannette, who, for the firſt time, felt the power of jealouſy. In that fatal paſſion the imagination is troubled, and Jeannette went ſo far as to fear that the mother of the child might be yet in exiſtence, and was the miſtreſs of her huſband, and was even travelling along with him, whilſt ſhe, Jeannette, had the complaiſance to take care of their child. However, this ſilly idea did not remain long in her head; a thouſand wiſe reaſons deſtroyed it, and Jeannette relied on the ſole perſuaſion that the little Auguſtus was the ſon of M. Briceval.

This a little diſturbed her tranquillity and ordinary gaiety; but nothing could diminiſh the tenderneſs which the

child by degrees inſpired her with. He was ſo handſome, ſo amiable, ſo intereſting !......He had ſuch droll little ſayings!.....Jeannette and her mother finiſhed by cockering and even ſpoiling him; and he alone could conſole theſe two friends for the inquietude into which they were plunged by the abſence of Briceval, which laſted for a whole year. He wrote to them twice during that laſpe of time, and his laſt letter announced his approaching return; but that return, which was delayed could not be very remote, and without doubt, Briceval, on the road, muſt return with the firſt opportunity.

In the mean while, an event happened which cauſed very great pleaſure to the feeling Jeannette. Her friend Cecilia, whom ſhe had not heard of for near two years, ſuddenly appeared again; and this affecting diſcovery was brought about in the following manner:

We muſt recollect that the ſiſter Emily, when ſhe informed Jeannette, whom ſhe met in the ſtreet, that her parents might be found again. gave her her own addreſs, with that of the countryman Jacques: Jeannette, returned into the boſom of her family, had not failed to communicate her happineſs to that friend of her infancy, and even ſend her ſuccours: for this good woman lived by the labour of her hands, and her employment was not very lucrative. During her winter reſidence at Paris, Jeannette had often ſeen Emily, and had ſet her to work on her part to procure intelligence of the fate of the unfortunate Celicia, when unhappineſs affected her. Emily had not ſucceeded any more than Madame Briceval; and the deſtiny of Cecilia remained always covered with the thickeſt veil.

One day Emily, who worked at embroidery, was ordered to go to the houſe of an unknown lady who had ſome work to give her. Emily goes, converſes with the lady, takes the work which ſhe offers her, and ſuddenly a perſon enters. Ah, my dear brother! are you there! well, what news?—It is terrible, my dear ſiſter, always the ſame; this unfortunate woman! with haughtineſs in her indigence, ſhe abſolutely refuſes the aſſiſtance which you ſent to her, ſhe pretends that her labour is ſufficient to maintain her, and that ſhe works ſtill! if ſhe, has work! but ſhe has not any; the bone lace does not go on: they give her nothing to do.....—There is but one way left; that is to procure her ſome work, and to pay her a good price for it; that would not wound her delicacy. If, Madame, *(addreſſing himſelf to Emily,)*

you could render us that ſervice amongſt your acquaintances.—Sir, that does not lay in my way of buſineſs, I only embroider. It is for a moſt intereſting woman, whom neither her birth nor fortune had deſtined to this dreadful ſtate.—Alas, Sir! I knew an amiable lady like her, whom misfortunes have ruined, and compelled alſo to work for her bread; Mademoiſelle D'Eranville; every body was acquainted with that name........Mademoiſelle D'Eranville! what do you ſay? That you know her? well, it is for herſelf that I ſpeak to you.

Emily, remained mute with aſtoniſhment; then ſhe exclaimed: For her! Is it her? Ah, good Heavens! oh, Sir! we have been ſearching for her a long time!—Who, Cecilia? you ſearch for her!—Me, and her loving, her beſt friend Jeannette.—Jeannette alſo, you

fee her fometimes? where is fhe? where is fhe?—But, Sir, pardon me: to whom have I the honour to fpeak? —You behold in me M. Verneuil, the intimate friend of Cecilia, of Jeannette; and this is my fifter, Madame Dolmont, whom I have brought out of the country to Paris.

M. Verneuil put a thoufand queftions to Emily, to which fhe returned fatisfactory anfwers. M. Verneuil exclaimed; Jeannette fo rich, married in the bofom of her family? Quick, Labrie, a hackney coach; Mademoifelle Emily will be pleafed to come along with us, to fee Cecilia, and inform her of fo many happy changes.

Emily confented to it: fhe gets into the carriage with Madame Dolmont and her brother, and they all three arrive at Cecilia's, who lived on the fourth ftory in the fuburbs of Paris.

Emily recoiled two paces at feeing the change which misfortune had wrought in the features of her friend. Holy Virgin! ingenuoufly faid this good woman; is that Madame D'Eranville I fee there?—The fame perfon: oh, it is you, my good Emily! do you bring me any news of Jeannette?—Yes, certainly, Mademoifelle, I have; and good news too.

Emily repeated to Cecilia all that fhe had told M. Verneuil. She added, that Jeannette, at prefent Madame Briceval, had never ceafed to think on her friend, and that they had made a thoufand fruitlefs inquiries; but where was you then employed? added Emily. —Ah, my dear! replied Cecilia, afk me rather where they had concealed me; I will relate you all the particulars: but Jeannette, that good friend, whom I had the ingratitude to accufe,

when ſhall I ſee her? We will ſet out immediately to ſee her, replied M. Verneuil: we muſt ſurpriſe her very agreeably. Let us not write to her; nor ſay any thing to her, and alight at her houſe at the inſtant when ſhe the leaſt expects it.—What, Sir! retorted Cecilia, would you have me to go to Madame Briceval in the ſtate I am? to look as if I came to aſk her!.....It is not your heart, Cecilia, that has dictated ſuch injurious words againſt Jeannette; you know not that rare and moſt eſtimable woman; but to ſpare your delicacy, with your permiſſion, my ſiſter and myſelf will accompany you to Chartres; you ſhall not look like one fallen from the clouds; for that, without doubt, is what you apprehend. What o'clock is it? not yet twelve. We can ſet off by the poſt this evening; the days are long, and it is moſt

beautiful weather: come, let us go? ....Oh, Sir!....—Hey! what, you hesitate, Cecilia? do you poſſeſs ſufficient inſenſibility to refuſe going to embrace a friend?—Sir, do not my heart that injuſtice....but will miſery and misfortune permit me to go and offer myſelf before the eyes of opulence!—If misfortune, Cecilia, had not ſoured your temper, I ſhould have taken permiſſion to blame this movement of ſo miſplaced vanity; but I know your ſoul; it contradicts the haughtineſs of your mind: you are made to partake and know the value of friendſhip, Cecilia; but if you are leſs happy, you know what reproaches we ſhould make ourſelves? Do not ſpeak of that, Sir; I cannot accept the gifts which I have done nothing to mérit; I may bluſh for a moment to ſtand in the preſence of a friend, whom fortune has raiſed to the

ſummit of the car from which ſhe has precipitated me; but I feel myſelf great enough to go and partake her embraces, or deſpiſe her diſdain, if her good fortune ſhould have changed her character. Let us depart.—What miſanthropy! it is neceſſary to know you in order to excuſe it.

M. Verneuil gave his orders for their departure, and he was heard to murmur in a low voice: She is married!... Another poſſeſſes that treaſure! poor Verneuil!....

This invaluable man ſighed; and Cecilia, who alone divined the motive of his emotion, forgetting that conſolation ſhe wanted herſelf, laviſhed it on her friend; however, without letting him perceive that ſhe had known, for a long time, his love for Jeannette. All is at laſt ready, and M. Verneuil, Madame Dolmont, Cecilia, as well as

the good Emily, mounted all four into a berlin, which ſuddenly flew towards the object of all their wiſhes.

Jeannette, Jeannette, what are you about at Chartres? Happineſs is on the road; is not your heart agitated with a pleaſing preſentiment?.....

CHAPTER XXIX.

Are we near to the Cataſtrophe?

JEANNETTE was walking in the garden with her mother. The evening was cool and remarkably fine. The flowers drooping not long ago by the heat of the day grew ſtrait again upon their ſtalks, refreſhed by a gentle dew; they opened their calixes and perfumed the air with a thouſand delicious odours. The moon, at full, reflected her face in the water of the canal, and the nightingale, perched on a tree in the grove, rejoiced nature with her melodious concerts. Jeannette was cheerful and tranquil; ſhe

was talking with her mother concerning Briceval's approaching return, who was expected every day; and the two friends did not think of enjoying that sleep to which the little Augustus had been delivered for several hours, when they heard the dog bark in the fore court. What is that! said Madame Dericourt; they ring at the street door: at this hour, who comes to visit us? The gardener does not go to open it; he is gone to bed; but his old wife is yet....—Oh, they open it: let us go and see.... but who comes running towards us so fast?....

In the garden! exclaimed a voice: I'll go!...Madame, Madame? Madame Briceval?—Here I am: who is it?—It is Emily, it is me: come then: good news: I bring you a numerous company.—Who are they?—Cecilia, your friend: Cecilia, whom I have

found again!—Is it poſſible? where is ſhe?—There; behold her.

Cecilia in fact had followed Emily, whom they had ſent forwards gently to forewarn Jeannette, but which ſhe had done bluntly enough, as we have already ſeen. Cecilia and Jeannette are mutually claſped in each other's arms; their faces, their hands are inundated with tears of ſenſibility: they are unable to ſpeak; they claſp each other ſtill cloſer; and Madame Dericourt was obliged to receive Madame Dolmont and her brother, whom Jeannette has not had time to remark. O my friend, it is you! it is you! And this was all that Cecilia and Jeannette could ſay to be underſtood, and they were claſped ſo ſtrongly together, that they were obliged to ſeparate them, for fear their health ſhould ſuffer from that affecting expanſion of

their hearts. Jeannette then perceived M. Verneuil with a lady that was unknown to her. Jeannette ſaluted them affectionately; but returned to Cecilia, and theſe two friends walked with their arms round each other till they reached the ſaloon, into which Madame Dericourt cauſed the company to enter.

Jeannette put a thouſand queſtions to Cecilia, who, without anſwering her, interrogated her in turn. A truce with queſtions for this evening, cried Madame Dericourt; a truce with explanations, my dear daughter; let us think of giving theſe ladies ſomething for ſupper, and ſend them to bed; for they have been travelling.

The prohibition of Madame Dericourt is with difficulty obſerved; but that good mother purpoſely turned the converſation upon general ſubjects, and

they no longer difcourfe upon the happinefs of their meeting again. It was decided that next morning at breakfaft they fhould each of them relate their adventures, and fupper was ferved up. Mademoifelle D'Eranville, faid Madame Dericourt, what infinite obligations am I not under to you and your generous family, for having preferved my child for me! what a very happy day is this to me, in which I fee you, on which I embrace the benefactrice of my child!—Oh! Madame, do not fpeak of benefits, the heart of Jeannette merits friends that are more happy. Can you yet think on misfortune, interrupted Jeannette, when we meet each other again, Mademoifelle? what more misfortunes can attack us? I defy barbarous fortune to perfecute you again.—Madame, replied Cecilia in a low voice, you alone know what

will be always wanting to my wiſhes! I underſtand, I underſtand: never any news of the father, nor of the ſon!—None, Madame, but, pardon me; let us leave my ſecret grief, and let us only think on the pleaſure I experience in ſeeing you again.—Mademoiſelle, one thing nevertheleſs troubles that pleaſure......not on my ſide at leaſt...... formerly you had the goodneſs to be plain with me; I was your *good Jeannette*....—Has Madame Briceval loſt her rights to that affecting language? Madame....the times are very much changed!—But our hearts are not: ſpeak to me then as formerly. I ſhall loſe too much by my change of ſituation!—Suffer me, my friend; what I owe to you as well as to myſelf, you will diſoblige me to inſiſt any more.—Call me then at leaſt your dear Jean-

nette!—Well, be it ſo, my dear Jeannette! Oh! what obligations have we both to that kind Emily, and to this worthy friend who brought us all away from Paris, without giving us time to breathe.—M. Verneuil leaves no bounds to my acknowledgements.—Ah, Madame, anſwered Verneuil ſighing...... but where is your huſband?—My huſband has been abſent about a year: but I expect him every day. He will be very happy to ſee you.—Madame!...

M. Verneuil ſighed again, and Cecilia comprehended that the ſight of M. Briceval was the thing he was the leaſt deſirous of. The remainder of the evening paſſed in pleaſing diſcourſe; and each went to enjoy the ſleep that was ſo neceſſary after their long bodily fatigues, and the commotions which the heart had ſuſtained in the journey.

Next morning, Jeannette, who had caufed Cecilia to fleep near to her in her own chamber, obferved that fhe did not fleep. You have not had a good night's reft, my friend, faid fhe to her with chagrin. Very little; I know not why the image of Saint Ange has troubled my fleep during the whole of this night.—So there is no hope of meeting this dear lover?—Ah, Jeannette! perhaps he no longer exifts; but my fon, who fhall reftore him to me?—Mademoifelle, the turns of chance are fo fingular; fo inexplicable! For inftance, I defpaired of the pleafure of ever feeing you again, and a fingle day has fufficed to reftore you to my love. Hope, Mademoifelle; I have an idea that Saint Ange will be reftored to you.

Jeannette did not believe fhe could

read ſo well into the future, as we ſhall ſee in the ſequel.

Cecilia and her friend deſcended into the ſaloon, where the reſt of the company were already aſſembled. They breakfaſted; then Jeannette related all that had happened to her ſince her ſeparation from Cecilia. The circumſtances of her marriage with M. Briceval very much affected M. Verneuil, and Cecilia eaſily perceived his trouble. They were then deſirous to hear the hiſtory of Cecilia, and to know why all the ſearch that Jeannette had made after her, had proved fruitleſs. Cecilia whom the remembrance of her misfortunes afflicted two ſenſibly, deſired M. Verneuil to undertake that taſk, which he accepted; but Cecilia during that mournful recital went to walk in the garden with Emily, whoſe curioſity was a little diſappointed by that prome-

nade, that left M. Verneuil at liberty to ſpeak of Cecilia without reſerve; which he did in the following words.

"The very day of your departure from Paris, Madame Briceval, one of my friends offered me the opportunity of a carriage to go into Britany, where I wanted to claim, according to our new laws, the property which had been divided among my brothers to my detriment. I went then about two o clock in the afternoon, to take leave of Mademoiſelle D'Eranville, whom I found bathed in tears. It was your ſeparation in the morning that cauſed them to flow. I aſſured her of my regret which I felt at abandoning her in my turn at ſo critical a moment, and I departed. The ſame evening, Madame Aubry, the owner of the houſe, went up ſtairs to her quite frightened; Ah, my dear child! ſaid ſhe to her, ſave yourſelf,

they are looking for you—Who, me?—You, Mademoiſelle Daſcourt; I am ſure it is for you.—They are miſtaken, I have done nothing that could poſſibly expoſe me.......Then you will not ſave yourſelf, you are in the wrong: for here they are.

"In fact, the officers of juſtice crowded in. An officer ſhewed Cecilia his order to arreſt her; and in ſpite of the cries, and groans of that unfortunate woman, they had the cruelty to tear her from the arms of her affrighted hoſteſs. They put her into a coach, and ſhe travelled without knowing where ſhe was going. She paſſed thus four days and four nights on the road, without taking any other nouriſhment than a little of the groſs aliments which they offered her as to a criminal: and arrived at laſt at the town of Rennes, where they plunged her into a cloſe

prifon, without letting her know the crimes laid to her charge. They interrogate her: and the crime of which they accufe her is fo new to her eyes, that fhe fees clearly that fhe is a prifoner only on account of the name of Dafcourt, which fhe had affumed. A woman named Dafcourt was compromifed in an extenfive confpiracy, they believed that fhe was concealed in Paris, and the fimiliarity of name had been the caufe of Cecilia's misfortune. You may readily conceive that fhe had no trouble in proving that fhe was not that great culprit which they thought they had hold of; but it was neceffary for her to declare her real name, and that appeared fufpicious. Why had fhe changed her name? and what was her motive? In vain Cecilia excufed herfelf, by the luftre of her former brilliant name, a luftre which her indigence would tar-

niſh, and the neceſſity of working for the public; that did not appear to be ſatisfactory, and it was no longer as a conſpiratrix, but as a ſuſpected perſon, that the poor Cecilia was impriſoned again. She remained there near a year, unhappy, cloſely confined, and without being able to correſpond with any perſon whatſoever. I ſhall paſs over the details of her ſufferings in her melancholy priſon, to come to her departure from that horrid place. I was then, myſelf, in the environs of Rennes, occupied with my perſonal affairs, when chance conducted me into the place where your friend was groaning. I went there to ſee one of my friends who has ſince been acknowledged innocent. I heard talk of Mademoiſelle D'Eranville; I inform myſelf on the ſubject: I learn that, this invaluable lady is de-

tained: I run, I intercede, and I at laſt obtain her liberty. You will permit me to abridge the recital of the trivial ſervices that I was then ſo happy as to render her..........What! ſaid I to her when ſhe was at my ſiſter's houſe, at Madame Dolmont's, whom you ſee here preſent, is it poſſible, Mademoiſelle, that you have been the victim to the ſimilarity of a name? I have often heard talk of the proſecution againſt that woman Daſcourt; and it was you that they miſtook for that monſter? Alas! if I had known it ſooner! but in fine we poſſeſs you: you are here, and I hope that you will never quit us more!—And Jeannette, ſaid that feeling woman to me, (for that was the firſt word ſhe uttered,) and Jeannette, ſir, have they heard any news of her? On the remembrance of that friend, I de-

termined them all to come and trouble you; and if we determined to take you by ſurpriſe, if we have taken ſo many liberties, it is to me alone you ought to direct your reproaches !......"

CHAPTER XXX.

Good news which will not be confirmed.

M. Verneuil ceafed fpeaking; and Jeannette after having thanked him for the flattering things concerning her which he had placed in his recital, admired, as well as her mother, Cecilia's noble ftatelinefs of character, who would owe nothing to generofity, all to labour. Jeannette, who was better acquainted than any other perfon with the heart of her friend, explained her conduct, in hazarding even fome reflections not very agreeable to M. Verneuil. Befides fir, faid fhe to him, can a young woman be blamed, who by herfelf, with-

out a husband, without relations, might draw upon herself the shafts of calumny, by receiving favours from an ancient ecclesiastic, a bachelor, and apt to inspire esteem? The world is censorious! what have we not heard said concerning your visits at our house when we lived with Madame Aubry! That Madame Aubry herself was the first gazette that communicated to every body her conjectures on our manner of living, and you always stood for something in these flourishes of her tongue. I agree that, at Madame Dolmont's house, the abode of a young woman was sanctioned by decorum; but you, sir, also resided there, and nothing could prevent calumny and malice from tarnishing the reputation of Madame D'Eranville......... For the rest, my rare and valuable friend, I very sincerely thank you for what you have done for Cecilia up to

the present time, you deserve the esteem of every honest man, and I cannot find terms sufficient to express my gratitude. At present that Cecilia is here permit me to finish your work: deign also to assist me in engaging her to live with me, with my mother and my husband. I dare believe she will not refuse me; but, if you join your solicitations to mine, I am more sure to obtain that favour from her.

M. Verneuil and his sister promised Jeannette to second her in her laudable project. Cecilia came back with Emily, and knowing that all her friends had learned her humiliating detention, she blushed without daring to lift her eyes to Jeannette. The latter, who guessed the secret motive of her shame, was eager to divert her from her doleful ideas: she complimented her on her attachment for M. Verneuil, who, add-

ed ſhe, is the moſt valuable man that I know !.......

This ſpeech gave M. Verneuil a ſecret pleaſure; but he reſumed his grief when he reflected that Jeannette was married, and that he had loſt all hope of ever being happy.

That feeling man had unveiled his heart to his ſiſter. The worthy Madame Dolmont, jealous of her brother's peace of mind, engaged him to fly from a houſe, where every thing nouriſhed his hopeleſs love. In conſequence, to have a decent pretext for departing, M. Verneuil, feigning to enter into Jeannette's views, announced, the ſame evening at ſupper, that the next morning he ſhould return to Paris with Madame Dolmont. I have quitted all, added he, recoveries, lawſuits, the devil, that occupied me every day in that city, where I have not

a moment to yield to my pleaſures. My affairs may ſuffer by too long an abſence: Mademoiſelle D'Eranville's preſence will ſoon make you forget my abſence.—But replied Cecilia, a little diſturbed, I thought my friend, that you would have given me a place in the carriage to return to Paris?

Jeannette took Cecilia by the hand: Mademoiſelle, ſaid ſhe to her with an affecting and tender tone of voice, I will only recall to your remembrance a ſaying of your own; after that, you may quit me if you have the heart to do it! that ſpeech which you made to me before our ſeparation: *Jeannette, my good Jeannette*, it was thus that you expreſſed yourſelf, *I eſteem friendſhip too much to bluſh* in partaking its fortune. (*Jeannette had altered a few words; for Cecilia had ſaid, to bluſh at its benefactions.*) Depart, Mademoiſelle, depart at pre-

ſent, if you do not underſtand me.

Cecilia remained confounded: her miſtruſt and her miſanthropy would then have dictated her anſwer; but her heart ſilenced thoſe two melancholy counſellors, and ſhe only anſwered Jeannette by throwing her two arms around her neck, and hiding her face in her boſom. I underſtand you, ſaid Jeannette! you ſtay with me, with my mother, my kind mother, who, from this moment, will believe ſhe poſſeſſes two affectionate daughters, equally inclined to love her and reſpect her!—Jeannette, I did not ſay that.—No; but I ſay it for you. Will you, M. Verneuil, when you return to Paris, diſcharge Mademoiſelle D'Eranville's lodgings: (ſmiling) you will very readily give him your letter of attorney for that purpoſe, is it not ſo, my dear friend?--But Jeannette!.....—No more buts, a

bold yes, is what I aſk of you.—Well, Jeannette, my dear Jeannette, lead me as you pleaſe. Yes, I will ſtay with you; I honour myſelf with your friendſhip, *with your benefactions*; and this victory which you obtain over my.....delicacy, is a ſure warrant to you of my love for you!

M. Verneuil and Madame Dolmont congratulated Cecilia on her determination, and Madame Dericourt thanked her for it with a feeling grace. The next morning M. Verneuil departed with his ſiſter, Emily and Cecilia were definitively to remain near Jeannette. The only inquietude of Cecilia was to know how M. Briceval would approve of her reſiding in his houſe: ſhe did not know him; and although Jeannette aſſured her that her huſband was a very worthy man, and complaiſant to his wife, Cecilia very reaſonably doubted

whether the husband would partake the excess of tenderness that the wife had for her. However, she cheered up again from that vain terror, when Madame Dericourt repeated to her the same praises that Jeannette had bestowed on Briceval. Cecilia, happy and tranquil as much as she could be at a distance from Saint Ange, delivered herself entirely to the effusions of the two excellent beings who had admitted her into their house, and she endeavoured to render herself useful to them by all little attentions, and some light works agreeable to her sex. See then, said she to her friend, see, Jeannette, the caprice of fortune ? See me here in your house precisely in the same situation as you was at my father's ! How things change !—Mademoiselle has said a thing that affects me much! Can Mademoiselle possibly consider herself in the

ſituation in which I was placed, at M. D'Eranville's, a poor orphan, brought up by charity ? My friend ſhould think herſelf equally miſtreſs in this houſe as myſelf.—Yes, my dear friend ; but there is a maſter, whom I have not yet ſeen, who may, with reaſon, think my claims very ridiculous.—Mademoiſelle ſhould wait till ſhe knows him, before ſhe forms a judgement !—But, Jeannette, you have not told me who that handſome child is whom I have careſſed ſo much ſince I have been here ? It cannot be your ſon ; for he appears to be four years old, and you have only baen married about two years ?—This child !..(Jeannette turned pale) is a young orphan that my huſband recommended to me before his departure. He takes a lively intereſt in him.—Lovely child ! I know not why his countenance excites an uneaſineſs in me ?.......He recalls my

own ſon to my mind, who ſhould be of the ſame age !

Cecilia ſighed : Jeannette alſo ſighed, but from a very different motive. Cecilia thought of her lover; Jeannette was jealous, and thought on the ſmall degree of delicacy ſhe ſuppoſed her huſband could poſſeſs, who had introduced to her the child of love or lewdneſs.-- Theſe two perſons remained ſome time thoughtful. Madame Dericourt came to divert them from their melancholy, and ſerenity once more appeared on their brows.

A month elapſed without Briceval appearing again. Jeannette was exceſſively uneaſy at it, and Cecilia dreaded the arrival of that ſtranger, from whom ſhe apprehended a cold reception and aſtoniſhment. Cecilia was more tranquil at not ſeeing him arrive ; but how many cares did ſhe coſt the delicacy of

Jeannette! what trouble had ſhe to compel her to accept objects even of the firſt neceſſity. What round-about ways did ſhe take to get her to accept ſome faſhionable dreſſes, and ſome trifling jewels of which Jeannette feigned ſhe wanted to get rid, to engage her to receive them! It was Jeannette's whole ſtudy, and ſhe really ſtood in need of all her courage, all the conſtancy of friendſhip, to ſeek every day for new means to oblige her friend, without alarming her miſanthropy, without wounding her delicacy.

CHAPTER XXXI.

In which the intelligent Reader learns nothing.

At laſt the day ſo much wiſhed for by Jeannette, and ſo much dreaded by Cecilia, governed by fatal preſentiments, that day which was to bring back M. Briceval, arrived, to deſtroy the happineſs of every body. A meſſenger arrived early in the morning at Jeannette's houſe; he has ten leagues the ſtart of her huſband: he has brought a letter, in which that eager huſband aſſures his wi e that he will come to dine with her. He has terminated his affairs happily; that he is

worth almoſt a million, always tender, conſtant, and burning with deſire to embrace his wife, his mother-in-law, and the *little Auguſtus* who muſt needs be much altered in a year.

The attention of Briceval for the *little Auguſtus* was not the moſt flattering to Madame Briceval; but, in fine, ſhe is going to ſee her huſband once more: his letter is tender, and full of paſſion: what joy for Jeannette! She and her mother haſtened to inform Cecilia of this news; who grew pale, without knowing from what cauſe ſhe was ſo much troubled. Jeannette rallied her uponit: Cecilia excuſed herſelf, by ſaying ſhe was indiſpoſed; and intreated her friend to permit her to keep her apartment all day.—I do not underſtand that, Mademoiſelle, replied Jeannette with a ſmile: I gueſs your thoughts; you always are in fear that

my hufband does not poffefs a heart like mine own, and you dread him as we dread a fevere and difobliging ftranger. Cheer up again, once more, Mademoifelle; Briceval would not be worthy of my love, if his character differed from mine. If I love that hufband, it is becaufe he has the fame love for me, and the virtues we reflect on together we practife together. My dear friend, you had better appear at dinner amongft us, and not trouble, by the vexation of your abfence, the pleafure that a family which loves you is about to tafte in feeing the mafter of it once more!

Cecilia knew that her conduct would in fact not be civil, if fhe hid herfelf: fhe reflected that fooner or later fhe muft neceffarily fee this M. Briceval, and fhe refolved within herfelf not to put off the moment. My dear friend,

ſaid ſhe to Jeannette, I will do whatever you pleaſe; but you will permit me in your turn to remain in my apartment until you have forewarned your huſband of my indiſcretion in taking up my abode in his houſe; after which you will take the trouble to fetch me; we will then go down together, and then you will preſent me to that man who has engaged before hand all my eſteem.

Jeannette conſented to that arrangement; ſhe deſcended to give orders to prepare a little entertainment for her huſband. A ſuberb repaſt, noſegays preſented by groups of young herdſmen, fire-works too, as well as dances and illuminations, all are prepared; and the ſtreet and the ward, and even the city, informed of M. Briceval's return, propoſed to contribute to the fete which his wife was about to give him.

Jeannette is every where: it is ſhe that places the garland of flowers and the ſmall lamps in her garden; tranſparencies, cyphers, and inſcriptions are every were to be ſeen: in a word, M. Briceval will be aſtoniſhed when he enters his own houſe. Oh, yes, he will be very much ſurprized!....but in what manner? Let us proceed.

At three o'clock in the afternoon, cries of joy are heard in the ſtreet of the Viſitation, which is full o people; the poſtillion's whip announces the arrival of the poſt chaiſe. It enters into the court: applauſes, *long lives* are ſhouted on all ſides; and, Briceval deſcends from the carriage into the arms of his wife and mother-in-law. The little Auguſtus, dreſſed like Cupid, preſents him a double heart in flame, on which is inſcribed:

Cupid and Hymen have re-united them!

Briceval was inchanted with this device; and it might be perceived that the disguise of Augustus aroused more than one idea, and recalled more than one tender remembrance!....

In fine, Briceval in his own house, feasted, praised, embraced: he has made a fortunate voyage; he sees again his household goods; he is at the utmost height of frantic joy. Madame Dericourt communicated to him the happiness that Jeannette had enjoyed in finding Madame D'Eranville again, who she very much wished should take up her abode with them. That is right, very right, my dear mother, replied Briceval; but where is she, this interesting woman whom I have never seen, but whose parents were the friends of my unfortunate father! I myself in my infancy, was received into the house of her father, and it was there Jean-

nette where you called me your *little husband*, without conjecturing that one day I ſhould become your great and real huſband. How kindly I take it, Madame, that you have offered a friendly aſylum to that unfortunate lady of whom my wife has ſo often ſpoken to me! But where is ſhe? why is ſhe not partaker in the general joy. She does my heart an injury to think it leſs feeling than that of her friend Jeannette? Oh deign to preſent to me that ineſtimable daughter of your generous benefactors, my dear Jeannette! I entreat you would.—My dear Briceval, replied Jeannette, I had gueſſed your ſentiments towards her: I run to find her.

Jeannette in fact flew to the apartment of Cecilia, and, during that time, Madame Dericourt cauſed her ſon-in-law to ſeat himſelf at table. She places

herſelf by his ſide, and ſome neighbours and friends whom they had invited alſo ſat down, reſerving two places for Madame Briceval and her friend.

Madame Briceval appeared, accompanied by Cecilia, who, confuſed and trembling, did not dare to lift her eyes from the ground to look at the maſter of the houſe....Briceval riſes, runs to Cecilia: Mademoiſelle, ſaid he, deign— Heavens! who do I ſee?—Cecilia lifts her eyes, and exclaims: Saint Ange! Oh! oh! unhappy woman!....—and faints away.......

Here the pen, too feeble to expreſs the effect produced by their exclamation, drops from the hand, and it is a deſcription which muſt be left to the judgement of the reader.

Briceval with his hands before his face, leaned againſt the wainſcot.

Madame Dericourt not knowing the meaning of all this, ran to Cecilia, who is deprived of all motion, and who, Jeannette, too much affected herself, has not the ſtrength to ſupport. The poor Jeannette is alſo ready to fall in a ſwoon, and all the aſſembly remain mute, in the attitude of perſons who wait an explanation.

The dumb ſcene is prolonged; and Madame Dericourt, not being able to recall Cecilia to her ſenſes, took the reſolution to have her carried to her apartment, recommending her to the care of the good Thereſa. As to Jeannette, ſhe remained for a long time confounded: ſhe did not dare then to interrogate her huſband: but ſhe reflected; and, born reſolute and enterpriſing, ſhe immediately came to a deciſion. Sir, ſaid ſhe quietly to her huſband, let not this ſingular event,

which was without doubt unexpected, but natural enough, disturb the pleasure of this happy day. Come and sit down at table.—Madame, permit me to retire to my chamber.—Sir, I conceive your surprise; but I swear to you it cannot equal mine: but, in fine, I hope your wife will not suffer by a meeting which she was very far from expecting.—Madame, where is Mademoiselle Saint Brice?—Mademoiselle Saint Brice, Sir, is not the name of my friend: she is called Cecilia D'Eranville. Saint Brice is a fictitious name which her father assumed in his travels; but these details would be misplaced at this instant. Will you, Sir, be pleased to attend to the little entertainment which your wife had prepared against your return, and not give her the vexation to see her hope deceived and the quiet of her house disturbed for a rival!. ...

CHAPTER XXXII.

Jeannette appears in a new Character.

BRICEVAL, recovered from his firſt aſtoniſhment, looked at Jeannette: he could not conceive it was her that ſpoke, and that ſpoke thus of her friend, to whom ſhe had ſo many obligations, on whom ſhe made the greateſt eulogies. He was awed by her cold and poſitive tone. He addreſſed himſelf to Madame Dericourt: my dear mother, what is become of Mademoiſelle D'Eranville? my dear friend, ſhe is in her own chamber; where ſhe can receive the neceſſary aſſiſtance her fainting requires.—-Her unfortunate

ſwoon!....Cruel uncle! O that ſhe no longer exiſted......Thou didſt perſuade me!

Jeannette is pale: ſhe may be perceived to ſuffer; but ſhe refrains herſelf; and, ſeating herſelf at table, ſhe ſtrives to make the gueſts ſmile, ſaying to them: Come, gentlemen, let not this hinder us from making M. Briceval welcome: he is going himſelf to preſide at this table: oh, he eſteems his wife and his friends too much to ſeparate himſelf from their ſociety the day of his return!

Briceval looked ſteadfaſtly at Jeannette, made ſome paces towards the door; then, returning, he ſat down near his wife, and contented himſelf with ſaying to Madame Dericourt: Dear mother! let them take proper care of her!—Do not be uneaſy about

it, ſon; in a moment I ſhall myſelf go up to her apartment.

The repaſt was a melancholy one, as may be readily imagined: the ſtrangers invited ate by themſelves, whiſpered in each other's ear, or fixed their eyes upon the owners of the manſion all dinner time. Jeannette affected tranquillity and even gaiety; ſhe paid the greateſt attention to the little Auguſtus, of whom ſhe now knew the parents; afterwards ſhe had the reſolution to preſide at the illuminations, and even at the fire-works, at which ſhe forced her huſband to be preſent.

How afflicted was that civil and delicate huſband!.....farther on, we ſhall know him better.

When all the company had retired, Jeannette would have gone up to her friend's apartment; but Madame Deri-

court oppofed it. Why fo, dear mother? faid fhe aloud before Briceval; my hufband and myfelf wifh to go up together to inquire after her health. —My dear daughter that cannot be. I was defirous of concealing it from you as long as that rout was tiring us here, but now it is gone.—How gone, my dear mother! what the crowd?—Oh, no, Mademoifelle D'Eranville! when fhe came to herfelf, fhe did nothing but weep and moan, then fhe fent for a coach; and after having thanked me for what fhe called our bounty towards her, fhe availed herfelf of the embarraffment in which you both were to withdraw herfelf from your view, and fet off for Paris.—My dear mother! and you have permitted that fick weak fufferer!....—I did all in my power to retain her; I could not prevail on her to ftop.—But I fhould have been in-

formed of it?—What would you have? I saw you presiding at the entertainment; and besides for my part....all that is an enigma to me: do I know what made her swoon, and seemed to electrify you all?—And she wept?—Without doubt she wept, she groaned: she muttered between her teeth: *Alas! my friend is her husband! I will not betray friendship! I will depart, and never shall they see me more.*—Poor Cecilia, she instructs me in my duty!

Jeannette let herself fall into an elbow chair, with her hands upon her eyes, from which some tears slid down. Briceval, pale and confused, let these words escape, which roused Jeannette from her reverie. She is gone!....she has done right, yes, yes, she has done right!——Done right, Sir, exclaimed Jeannette, rising, and with a tone of indignation! do you not love her any

longer?—Madame, I ought now....but you know then!—All, Sir: I know that you have basely taken advantage of her sleep at the perfidious Linval's; I know, in a word, that this child, this pretended Augustus, is her son and yours.—Madame!......who could have informed you?—Herself: Cecilia, before I knew you, had related the whole to me; but the change of both your names, your reserve with me, all has put me on a wrong scent. If I had known that you had borne the name of Saint Ange, I should have been enlightened, and you would not have had the trouble to take so many bye ways to introduce your child into my house.—Madame, pardon me; it is true, that I adored Cecilia, whom I only knew under the name of Saint Brice: I feel, yes, I feel that I still love her!—I am sorry for it, Sir; but I am your wife.—

I know it, Madame.....but that dear Cecilia!....I am your wife, you ſay to me!—Good Heavens, Madame, do you think me capable of forgetting it, of failing in the duties that marriage impoſes upon me?—At leaſt, Sir, ſhould you not think a divorce very convenient that you might reſume your former chains!—That ironical tone ſurpriſes me, Madame; you have not hitherto accuſtomed me to it? Do you not know that I abhor a divorce, and I regard that means of breaking the marriage ties as unworthy of a gentleman? neither, Madame, have you given me cauſe to come to that diſhonourable extremity?—I do not believe it, Sir. Moreover, let us lay all that aſide: your miſtreſs is no longer in my houſe; ſhe felt that ſhe could no longer remain near your wife: I am charmed that ſhe has taken that reſolu-

tion, which proves the purity of her ſoul; for, at bottom ſhe is a moſt ineſtimable woman.—Oh, moſt ineſtimable, and the more ſo in my eyes: ſince that I know who ſhe is, and what care ſhe and her parents have taken of your youth.—I ſhall never forget them, thoſe generous cares; but truly *(forcing a ſmile)* my gratitude ought not to extend ſo far, as to yield up my huſband to her. That dear huſband is too valuable in my eyes, that I ſhould make him the ſacrifice.—Ah! (*ironically*) you are very good!—Oh, more than you think for!

The wedded pair ſeparated: and that night, which ought to have offered them ſo many enjoyments after ſo long a ſeparation, that melancholy night ſaw them ſeparately ſeeking that repoſe which neither of them could enjoy.

Before going to her chamber, Jean-

nette had informed her mother of the whole connection between Briceval and Cecilia, and the good lady, quite astonished, had sworn to her daughter that her brother had never said a word about the matter. Jeannette, overwhelmed with astonishment and grief, could not sleep; and, however surprising her conduct may appear, she strengthened herself in the design which she had projected.

Reader, you are going perhaps to fall out with my Jeannette? I am afraid of it: I am nevertheless her historian, I ought not to pass over any thing concerning her......but deign to have patience, you shall judge in the sequel.

Bernard, the husband of Theresa, was an intelligent man, and of approved discretion. At day break, Madame Briceval caused that worthy servant to mount on horseback, and ordered him

to go fecretly, without waiting to bait on the road, to Paris, to take a letter to M. Verneuil, whofe addrefs fhe had happily retained. In that letter, Jeannette informed that common friend, of all that had paffed: fhe informed him of the connections of her hufband with Cecilia, and entreated him to detain Mademoifelle D'Eranville, till fhe had feen her, if yet fhe had taken refuge at his houfe; fhe further engaged him to fend her an anfwer by the fame courier.

Bernard being departed, Jeannette defcended into the garden, where fhe perceived her hufband, who had got thither before her: fhe approached him mildly. My dear, you have had a bad night's reft?—A very bad one, madame. —You may very well feel that my fleep muft alfo be very troubled?—Wrongfully, Madame; for, in fhort, in

what can all that affect you? I had not the advantage to know you when I ſaw and loved Mademoiſelle D'Eranville. I find her again, well....it is a ſtroke of fate that cannot alter your poſition; for I am married, am an honeſt man, and what is more, I love you, I eſteem you too much to maintain any connection with another, even ſhould I....burn always for her! you ſpoke to me yeſterday of a divorce! Oh, how diſtant is that from my thoughts! I, I am the cauſe of your woe! Jeannette, you cannot think me capable of being ſo? It is not me be aſſured, that they will ſee come to that extremity: it is ſo much abuſed, that it is diſhonourable. Alas then, what have you done to me, ineſtimable and tender woman? You prepared me an entertainment, I arrive!...and you diſcover in your houſe a rival and my ſon!......

Alas! it is that, Jeannette, which affects me even to tears! you do not merit such a chagrin!—Sir, so much candour and manly tenderness calms the chagrin which I ought doubtless to feel; but deign to inform me how you could contract new ties, loving always the woman by whom you had a child? for your last letter that I saw—pardon me; but do you recollect one evening a Madame Saint Albin sent you for some lace? It was to Cecilia's lodgings that you came: she was not at home; it was myself that received you. How, Jeannette! was it you? It was near night, and I scarcely noticed you; but in fact, when I perceived you here, your figure did not appear to me to be altogether unknown: but could I think?... ..It was there then that I lost the foul copy of a letter which I had begun to my

uncle. I looked for it a long time: but then I no longer bore the name of Saint Ange; and if you had aſked Madame Saint Albin, ſhe would have told you....What ſhe did alſo tell me, that the perſon ſhe had ſent to us, was not named Saint Ange.—She only knew me by the name of Briceval, which we had the happineſs to reinſtate in all its honours. That name had been ſtained by an infamous judgement which the Dericourts had obtained againſt my father. My uncle Julius, commander of the Order of Malta before the revolution, cauſed himſelf to be called Mellery and me Saint Ange. He diſcovered my love for the pretended Saint Brice; by the treachery of my faithleſs ſervant. That furious old man threatened me with his malediction and diſinheriſon, if I had the audacity to engage my faith before I ſhould have diſcovered the

daughter of Felix Dericourt, whom I ought to wed: I had promifed it to my dying father; he always placed that before my eyes. The old man was violent; I was in fear of him, he kept me in awe of him! Under the impoffibility of giving my hand to her that I loved, I dared to rob her of her child and mine, whom I placed with a nurfe that was devoted to me. It was thus that, travelling always with my uncle, I caufed, unknown to him, my fon to be brought up; but that mifchievous uncle, willing to root out love at once from my heart, read to me a forged letter (at prefent I perceive it,) from Madame Servol, from Calais. That friend informed me that Mademoifelle Saint Brice had died at Paris. You may judge of my grief! I might have taken it into my head to have gone to Calais, to Madame Servol, to

receive fuller information concerning this misfortune, if we had not learnt, ſome time after, that Madame Servol herſelf as well as her huſband had been plunged into the tomb by a contagious diſorder. From that time I believed my misfortune certain; and it was only in that conviction, Jeannette, that I conſented to obey my uncle, your mother, and the manes of my father, by marrying you! As long as my uncle lived, I concealed my ſon at the nurſe's houſe; but after the death of my uncle, I could not reſiſt the deſire to bring up near to me that child of a woman whom I thought was no longer in exiſtence: behold, Jeannette, the exact truth. Your mother herſelf was ignorant of the ſecrets which I have confided to you; my uncle was too fearful that ſhe would refuſe me your hand, if that virtuous woman had known that I

loved another, by whom I had a child of love. He never ſpoke to her concerning it; but you perceive by my confidence, Jeannette that your huſband eſteems you, ought to, and will love you, and conſtantly ſeek your happineſs!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Alas! Jeannette appears no longer amiable!

Briceval ſighed as he concluded theſe words, and Jeannette perceived that the love with which he flattered her, was only the reſignation of a virtuous man, who thinks that he ought not to let his wife ſuffer from the caprices of fortune. Jeannette did all in her power to engage him to comfort himſelf for the loſs of a woman that he adored; and what very much ſurpriſed Briceval, ſhe had the imprudence to encreaſe his regret, by drawing a moſt ſeducing picture of the virtues and charms of

Cecilia. Do not ſpeak to me any longer about it, Madame, ſaid he; you plead her cauſe more than your own.

He roſe up, entered another walk of the garden and diſappeared.

At dinner, which was not more cheerful than the day before, Jeannette announced that ſhe had formed the project of going to ſettle in Paris. She deſired her huſband to accompany her thither; and Briceval, who was not accuſtomed to refuſe the ſmalleſt triſle to his wife, conſented to it, without reflecting on the dangers which that reſidence might expoſe him to. Madame Dericourt was the only perſon affected by this plan: ſhe liked her houſe, the town of Chartres, and quiet, and determined to remain there. Jeannette urged her departure, and it was agreed that Jeannette ſhould go with her huſband to paſs ſome months at

Paris, that afterwards both of them ſhould return to live with their mother. Indeed, this deſire of Jeannette had much the appearance of caprice; but we are going to ſee her commit much greater follies.

Bernard ſecretly reported to Jeannette the anſwer of M. Verneuil. That in effect Cecilia had come to his houſe all in tears; that ſhe had related to him, as well as his ſiſter, her tender adventure with one named Saint Ange, and the moſt ſingular of all was that this Saint Ange and M. Briceval formed but one perſon; moreover, Cecilia made vows for the happineſs of her friend: ſhe was in deſpair at the fatal ray of light which, againſt her will, ſhe had let into the mind of Jeannette; ſhe ſwore never more to ſee Briceval again, but ſhe regretted her ſon, who, without doubt, was that handſome

child whom ſhe had ſeen at her friend's houſe. M. Verneuil concluded by promiſing the ſecreſy required, and above all to detain Cecilia, as Jeannette had recommended him.

This letter fulfilled the wiſhes of Madame Briceval. She urged again their departure; and ſome days afterwards, ſhe embraced her mother, who was not very well pleaſed with that abrupt leaving of her, and got into the carriage with her huſband.

Behold her again ſettled in her hotel in the ſuburb of Saint Germain: and what ſtrangely ſurpriſed Briceval was, that this woman ſo wiſe, ſo orderly, and ſo philoſophic during her reſidence in the province, engaged a great number of lackies, carriages of every deſcription, and made a ſcandalous ſhew. She had attached Bernard to her ſuite, whom ſhe had brought with her to

Paris; ſhe had need of this domeſtic, of whoſe fidelity ſhe was certain.

The ſecond day of her arrival, ſhe went with Bernard to the houſe of M. Verneuil; where they did not expect her; and Cecilia, who but little foreſaw that viſit, was there near to Madame Dolmont. Cecilia cried out when ſhe recognized Jeannette, not that ſhe was jealous, that ſhe had a grudge againſt her; but by an effect of ſhame, of grief, and ſurpriſe. What ails you, Mademoiſelle? ſaid Jeannette timidly to her; is it my appearance that cauſes you ſo great fear? Jeannette would be very unhappy if that was the caſe!—Madame, can you preſume?—I have loſt your friendſhip, I ſee it, and ſwear to you, that perhaps I never deſerved it better than at this moment.—Jeannette, I can neither bear you a grudge nor hate you: attri-

bute my ſurpriſe then only to the emotion I f.lt at ſeeing you. You are very happy; you are Madame Briceval!...—Alas, it is true, Mademoiſelle, that I am the wife of a man who was very dear to you! but if he appeared worthy of your love, judge how much he merits mine! I love him, I adore him; oh, I avow it....and I ſhall die, if ever I muſt behold myſelf ſeparated from him!....

Jeannette looked ſteadfaſtly at Cecilia. Cecilia is overcome, tears ſeem to eſcape from her eyelids. Madame Dolmont looks at her brother, as much as to ſay: *She has made a very indiſcreet confeſſion to her rival; ſhe ſhould huſband her ſenſibility a little better.*

Jeannette remarked all, and ſaid nothing. Cecilia exclaimed: My ſon, I ſhall then never ſee you more!—Whenever you pleaſe, Mademoiſelle; come

and ſee him at my houſe; I reſide at preſent in Paris.—Jeannette, if I could preſume that jealouſy had changed your heart, I ſhould take your propoſal for an irony. Can you perſuade me, that you look with a favourable eye on the....miſtreſs of your huſband?—Say, my friend, Mademoiſelle, always my friend, and you will appreciate the frankneſs of my diſcourſe.—Madame if you always love me, you are an angel! —I am no other, Mademoiſelle, than a woman devoted to your ſmalleſt wiſhes.—My wiſhes, Jeannette! Alas, I have but one to make!—In regard to that, Mademoiſelle, it is not in my power to ſatisfy you: I am ſorry to repeat to you; but my huſband!.....I will yield him up only with my life! and that will appear to you the more aſtoniſhing, when I know that he loves me not, and that it is you whom

he adores.—He adores me!...—Always Mademoiſelle; oh, more than ever!—Woman, what dare you to ſay to me, my dear friend! why do you not rather perſuade me that he hates me? you would diminiſh my regret.—I can only tell you the truth, Mademoiſelle; but I perceive that I am troubleſome to you, I will retire......

Cecilia would have recalled Jeannette; ſhe went out; and going into another room, ſhe held a private converſation with M. Verneuil, of which we ſhall ſoon know the reſult. Jeannette again gets into her carriage, and returns to her hotel.

The next day, ſhe ordered Bernard to conduct, unknown to his maſter, the little Charles to M. Verneuil's houſe. Bernard arrives with the child; delivers a letter to the maſter of the houſe; then aſking for Mademoiſelle

D'Eranville: Mademoiſelle ſaid he to her, I have brought your ſon.—My ſon! and by what order?—by the order of Madame.—Your miſtreſs ordered you....—Yes, Mademoiſelle, to bring the little Charles to you for a moment. Oh, you may ſee him whenever you pleaſe; Madame is ſo kind!—O mamma! cried the little Charles, running towards Cecilia.—Mamma! you call me your mamma, my little friend! who told you to give me that tender name?—It was my kind friend, Jeannette, who took me aſide a little while ago, and ſaid to me: Liſten, little Charles, you do not know your mother; well now, they are going to carry you to her, and be ſure to kiſs and careſs her well!

And, in ſaying theſe words, the child preſſed with his innocent hand the cheeks of Cecilia, which were

glowing with maternal love. Yes, my dear, ſaid ſhe; yes, I am your mother, your kind, your unfortunate mother! Alas, why can I not....reſtore your father to you!—Oh! I knew him too, my papa! my good friend told me it was her huſband.--How! did ſhe tell you that?—Yes, every thing! nay I am five years old; ſhe does not look upon me any longer as an infant.

Cecilia was aſtoniſhed, looked at Bernard: How kind your miſtreſs is, ſaid ſhe; ſhe cannot reſtore me to happineſs; but ſhe does every thing that can aſſwage my pain! ſhe procures me that pleaſure of ſeeing my ſon, of claſping him in my arms!..... O Jeannette! who would ever have thought that you would one day become my preferred rival?

Cecilia paſſed ſome ſweet moments with her child: then the ſervant took

him back again, promiſing his mother to procure her often that ſatisfaction.

The next day, Jeannette ordered Bernard to conduct Monſieur, without his ſuſpecting it, to M. Verneuil's houſe; and this is the method that he took. Briceval wanted very much to ſpeak to his notary about a very preſſing affair. Bernard told him that the notary had gone out, but that he had ſeen him enter the houſe of one of his clients which was near his own. As it is poſſible, Sir, added Bernard, that the notary may ſtay there the whole day, and as you have only two words to ſay to him, I will conduct you, if you will permit me, to the houſe where he is.

Briceval conſented, aſcended his one horſe chaiſe, and Bernard cauſed it to ſtop at the door of M. Verneuil. They go in together; Briceval enters, and

the first person whom he perceives is.... Cecilia! Cecilia was moved, and wanted to go into another room. Briceval not less astonished than herself, stops her: Pardon, Mademoiselle, I was ignorant that you lived here: I came hither in search of M. B....my notary, who they told me was here.— I much doubted, Sir, that it was not my presence that you sought!—Alas, Cecilia!—what use would it be of to see each other, to nourish our useless love now, and which would only double our sorrow?—I have not the ridiculous ambition to see you sighing incessantly for an unfortunate woman who owes all her misfortunes to you, without hope of ever obtaining any reparation for them.—Cecilia?....—You are married, you have an inestimable wife, worthy of your love; you owe her your whole heart.—Without doubt

Cecilia, I owe my whole being to my wife. That I married her without inclination is very true, and in the fatal certitude that you were no more. Oaths, a hiſtory of the family, which they doubtleſs related to you; all inclined me to the only marriage I could poſſibly contract: my wife affable, modeſt, and virtuous, has not merited a ſcandalous eclat, a divorce!—Alas, Sir, what a word have you pronounced? repel for ever that worſt of ideas! To ſee my friend unhappy through my felicity, would heap up the meaſure of my woes! Jeannette loves you, Sir; I judge, after my own heart, to what a degree ſhe would ſuffer!—She is my wife, Cecilia.—May ſhe be always ſo! —Always.

And he ſighed, and Cecilia looked at him, and was affected with the like emotion. Alas, Cecilia! continued

Briceval, how capricious is our deſtiny! —It is dreadful to me alone!—Then do you not believe, Cecilia, that I love you ſtill: that I regret your hand?—Sir...you ought to forget me!—Forget you! never.—I will repeat your own words to you. Of what uſe will it be to cheriſh your love?—It is impoſſible to drive it from my heart. Always, Cecilia, ſince our fatal ſeparation, I have thought of you Even in the arms of my wife, I laviſhed my eſteem for her; but your remembrance ſolely occupied my mind; my heart was wholly yours!—Why did you not, cruel man, at leaſt leave me my ſon, he would have in ſome degree, indemnified me for the loſs of you!—Cecilia, Charles has need of a father's inſtruction: he will one day be a man, and I ſhall neglect nothing....—Poor child! what will be his deſtiny!—Happy.—What

woes have his abſence cauſed us !....we are truly the victims of fatality.—Adieu, Cecilia.—Adieu, Saint Ange.... Go, rejoin your wife.—Yes....as you ſay ....I am going again to find a wife—Whom you ought to love.—Whom in fact I love....very much.

Another ſigh....and they ſeparated.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Worſe and Worſe.

In the mean time, Jeannette expreſſed to her aſtoniſhed huſband a coolneſs to which he had not been accuſtomed. Jeannette, that woman formerly ſo prudent, ſo reſerved, ſpeaks no more, acts no longer but as a heedleſs woman of faſhion, fickle, and giddy-brained. She has doubled her retinue and domeſtic ſervants; ſhe dreams only of fêtes, balls, and banquets, and ſeems to have undertaken to thwart her huſband, to inſult his gloomy melancholy and his juſt remorſe. She has aſſembled at her table

all the young fools and blockheads that could be found in Paris; there is a perpetual buzzing of diffuſe words that ſignify nothing. Madame Briceval ſeemed to be deſirous to dreſs in the faſhion of thoſe women of loſt reputation, whoſe names are ſo loudly cited at public places and in Ruelles. She is never at home, to attend to her huſband, or the concerns of her houſe: ſhe goes to breakfaſt with Madame This and goes to drink tea with Madame That. She ſcolds, ſhe torments every body, her huſband eſpecially.... Briceval, ſurpriſed to the laſt degree at this change, took the reſolution to go one morning into his wife's apartment. Jeannette, ſaid he gently, is it ſtill you that I ſpeak to, to that Jeannette formerly ſo gentle, ſo prudent, ſo reaſonable? How now! ſince you have reſided a few months at Paris, you are

very much ſpoiled! you are dreſſed in the faſhion, and you expoſe me to the ridicule of thoſe fooliſh huſbands whoſe wives are only cited, becauſe they are ſo to every body, except to him who has claims upon their heart!... Pardon the compariſon; it is doubtleſs too ſtrong: I believe you always virtuous; but the public opinion is againſt you.—Hey! what does opinion concern me, Sir, if I am always worthy of my own eſteem?—Such is the language of vanity......but appearances accuſe you. What are that ſwarm of blockheads and frivolous women that you aſſemble every day here? and you call them your friends! They are not mine, Madame; and there was a time when our friends were common to both of us. Jeannette explain to me that ſingular conduct, which doubtleſs has a ſecret motive; for your character can-

not have changed in ſuch a glaring manner!—My character, Sir, is always the ſame. Whilſt I believed myſelf beloved by you, whilſt I had the weakneſs to think that I alone occupied your heart, I believed it my duty to ſacrifice my taſte to yours, and to regulate my conduct by the miſanthropy of your character; I ſaid within myſelf, My huſband is an enemy to pleaſures, I will make him this ſacrifice, ſince I am the only object of his tender affection: my manners ought to be as pure as his own: theſe, Sir, are the reaſons that cauſed me to act in a manner conformable to your deſires. Recollect too our firſt reſidence at Paris? I delivered myſelf up to all the feaſts and all the pleaſures, for that it formed a part of my character to love ſociety and diſſipation. That life ſeemed to diſpleaſe you, I put an end to it: from complai-

ſance to you, I returned to our melancholy province. You there left me for a whole year a prey to the moſt profound ennui. You returned, and I diſcovered that you never had more than a regard for me: that your heart had been, and ſtill is, another's! I now ſay to myſelf, ſince I am deceived, ſince I am abuſed, I have nothing more to care for; I love pleaſure, pleaſure ſhall be my only law: I fear not the indifference of my huſband; I have acquired that already! I will anſwer it by the ſame coolneſs, and I will no longer bury my youth in ſolitude, becauſe ſolitude pleaſes him. This, ſir, is a candid explanation, as you perceive, of my preſent conduct.

Briceval, confounded, looked at Jeannette, and ſaid to her: you keep very bad company, Jeannette, and which will certainly corrupt your mind,

and that gives you ill counſels. Why do you ſuppoſe that I love you not? Alas! do I not give a ſufficiently great proof of friendſhip by remaining in thoſe bonds which you know are not thoſe my heart would have choſen?—You are very gallant, ſir!—Your candour excites mine. Yes, I love you not, Jeannette.........but I do more, I eſteem you, I eſteem you at leaſt! I believed your heart exempt from jealouſy; I ſuſpected it of greater attachment to a friend whoſe parents had brought you up. Inſtead of ſhewing yourſelf a generous rival, a feeling friend, you ſpeak no longer of that friend but with irony: you ſhun her, you ſhun her friends, that M. Verneuil whoſe good ſenſe and probity I have heard you boaſt of; and to add to the incongruity, you purſue every whim, and all this, ſay you, becauſe you are ſure that you do not poſ-

ſeſs my heart! Jeannette this is not the means to reclaim it towards you! I hope that this diſcourſe will ſuffice to reſtore you to your former ſenſes.

Briceval was going out, Jeannette ſtopped him: ſir?—What is it?—I want money.—Again, Madame? I never knew you ſpend ſo much before!—for the reſt, Madame, there is a rouleau, which is the ſixth, notice that, ſince your reſidence in Paris. I warn you that you will ruin me, if you apply to me ſo often. Enjoy it, Madame, but you will permit me one day to tell you more clearly, if you continue, my mode of thinking.

Briceval retired furious; Jeannette paid no manner of attention to the wiſe counſels which he had juſt given her. She decked herſelf with the greateſt care: then, accompanied by Bernard, who never quitted her, ſhe went into thoſe

circles, where for the firſt time, ſhe paſſed the whole night. We may judge the grief of her huſband, ſeeing her return in the morning, pale and wan! He would have ſcolded; ſhe flew in a paſſion; the poor huſband ſhut himſelf up in his chamber, where he cauſed Bernard to come to him. Bernard, my good friend, ſaid he, I promiſe you ſecreſy; but tell me where your miſtreſs paſſed the night?—Sir?... ſpeak. Whatever the ſecret may be that you are going to confide to me, I ſhall have ſufficient ſtrength to liſten to it, and diſcretion enough not to bring your name in queſtion with Madame.—Sir, do you promiſe me ſo?—Yes, yes,—But if, Madame ſhould come to know it!........She ſhall be ignorant of it, ſpeak?—Oh, Sir, Madame has been playing.—Playing?—Yes, Sir, and loſt, not only the hundred louis which you

were pleased to give her but two hundred more upon her parole.—Three hundred louis, good heaven! And in what infernal house?.....Ah, this is not the first time that Madame has played and lost!......I am sure that she has already left behind her at Madame E-tange's house, that pretended Baroness, that intriguer, known to all Paris by her passion for gaming, more than twenty thousand francs!—What say you? Where could she get them from;—I know not, Sir.—Very well, here's a very pretty way of life!

Scarcely was Bernard gone out of the apartment of Briceval, than the latter saw M. B ....his notary enter. Pardon me, Sir, if I disturb you; but I want an explanation with you. Do you authorize Madame Briceval to come to me so often for money on account of the funds which I have belonging to you?—

How, Sir, my wife goes—only a few minutes ago I gave her two thousand crowns ; but I have got her receipt.—Is it possible ? and so M. B.....you had the imprudence.—Sir, I have got her receipt I tell you, and Madame is without doubt sufficiently estimable for me to give her the money with confidence.—Ah, how much has she already touched at your house?—Why, out of the forty thousand francs which you left with me to reimburse what remained for your pay for the house in Du Barg Street, I have given Madame about one half.—Good heavens!—It was she told me, for purchase which she had made with your consent.—Alas! M. B.....at your age, with so much experience, that you should have given such large sums to a woman without the signature of her husband! and you to believe her falsehoods!.....but she will ruin me

if ſhe has to do with people as confident as you!.....I forbid you to give her a doit without my permiſſion.—Sir, if I had believed.......Leave me, Sir, I am in deſpair!.....

The notary retired, and Briceval, furious, went to his wiſe's apartment. She is gone out; a grand breakfaſt calls her to the houſe of a woman, whoſe very name is a ſcandal!—What a day did Briceval paſs! He wiſhed to ſee M. Verneuil, to implore the credit which he had upon the mind of Jeannette! Briceval goes to the houſe of that worthy man, and confides to him all his chagrins. M. Verneuil did not appear aſtoniſhed at it. He knows all that; he ſighs at it, and thinks with Briceval, that the mind of his wife is debauched, and her heart ſpoiled by evil counſels. Bernard has then told you all, added Verneuil? You muſt have been very

much ſurpriſed to learn that your wiſe, quitting you in the evening and ſeigning to go to her own chamber, ſhould afterwards go out of her apartment, and go and paſs all the night in gaming houſes, where ſhe has already ſtaked a great part of her fortune.—What, what! that night was not the firſt?—Was you ignorant of it? Indiſcreet that I am!......Since I have had the imprudence to inform you of it, you muſt know that about two months ago, ſhe borrowed of me two thouſand crowns, which I had deſtined for a repayment, and which I did myſelf the pleaſure to lend her, believing that ſhe would make a good uſe of it.—Here is another matter! but if ſhe borrows in like manner of every body, my dear Sir, I ſhall be ruined, ruined without reſource!—Cheer up; Sir; theſe thirty thouſand francs trouble me happily

very little, and I can eaſily wait your convenience to......That kindneſs penetrates me with gratitude! Ah, Sir; can this be the ſame Jeannette who lived for eighteen months ſo prudent, ſo reſerved with me? Her mother is ignorant of this odious conduct! her poor mother knows it not!—She knows all, Sir: Madame Dericourt pities you, and ſwears never more to ſee her daughter, whom fortune and her reſidence at Paris have rendered unworthy of her theſe are her expreſſions;......Oh, how unhappy I am!......

A woman enters, it is Cecilia: ſhe would have retired with affright. Stay Mademoiſelle, ſaid Briceval; oh! ſtay, conſole me at leaſt by the proſpect of your virtues, for the ſhameful vices of which a guilty wife gives me a fatal example.—Sir, they calumniate Madame Briceval; I cannot believe......To the

evidence, bluntly interrupted M. Verneuil? Have you loſt all confidence in me, Cecilia, and do you believe me capable of repeating calumnies, if I had not a certainty of the cruel truth?

Cecilia was ſilent. Briceval looks at her. O Mademoiſelle, how much am I to be pitied for having formed ſuch a connection? You would have ſcattered bleſſings in my houſe; but now hell is in my houſe.

Briceval ſhed ſome tears: Cecilia, affected, haſtened to dry them up; ſhe joined M. Verneuil and Madame Dolmont to offer thoſe conſolations to the unfortunate huſband, which he could no longer hear; in ſhort, after a moſt tender converſation which recalled his firſt flame, and gave a new activity to his love, Briceval departed, and entered again into his own houſe to meet with ſolitude and grief.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A violent Scene.—Conclusion.

Two days slid away and no Madame had made her re-appearance in the Hotel; she at last returned; and her husband, highly incensed, would not go into her apartment, for fear he should fly in a passion. He caused Bernard to come up. Whence come you? said he; where has your mistress been passing these two days?—Alas, my dear master, do not ask me that question!—I will know it, or I will turn you away.—Sir!—Speak, vile flatterer of the disorderly conduct of a guilty wife!—I am lost, Sir, if Madame knows.—Choose

ten louis, or an hundred baſtinados and your diſcharge?—Well, Sir, if you inſiſt upon it, I will chooſe the ten louis, and I will tell you that we have been in the country at that Madame Etange's.—There was a very large company!...... Madame played there and loſt all, even her jewels.—What horror! but formerly ſhe had not that taſte for play?—Oh pardon me there, Sir, I have made the obſervation, though I am but an ignorant fellow, eſpecially during the year you was abſent, at Chartres, Madame had her parties whither ſhe went to play, in the evening unknown to her mother.—'Twas that was the ruin of her! and ſhe has pledged her diamonds?—And beſides......Hey?—Ah! Sir you are going into a paſſion!—Tell all, Raſcal?—and after that a ſum of money that a young gentleman very gallantly lent her. Oh that---A young

gentleman?---That Madame thought very amiable, and who took great care of her.---Begone, ſcoundrel!....

Bernard, affrighted, made his eſcape. Briceval is deſperate: he feels, for the firſt time, the tranſports of jealouſy..... He walks about with long ſtrides; ſtrikes the furniture; he is in a dreadful ſtate. At laſt, he determines to go to his wife's apartment. Madame....I know all!---All, Sir! hey! and what then?---Who is that young man who follows you every where at Madame Etange's, that vile creature at whoſe houſe you paſſed two days?---That.... young man, Sir?---What you are troubled?---Who could have told you?---I know all your deportments, I tell you;---What do you call, Sir, my deportments? Am I not miſtreſs of my actions?---Unworthy woman; you compel me at laſt to regret Cecilia.---

It becomes you very much to make uſe of that name before me, you ought to bluſh at it!—I ought to bluſh! Oh, very well, Madame; your conduct has conquered my hatred for divorce. This is too much to bear; an end muſt be put to it, and I entreat you to conſent to it....Never, Sir. Divorce is a ſcandalous act, and always diſhonours a woman.—It can add nothing to your reputation.—I ſee how it is, Sir; you burn to fly into the arms of Cecilia! it is dreadful, and I am very unhappy to have married a man who loved another.—What you think I ſhall marry again, Madame? Well, let us do better; let us quietly ſeparate from each other, without eclat, with invoking the authority of the laws.—No, Sir, no; I will be free, myſelf, to give my hand to whom I pleaſe.—To that young man at Etange's?—Bernard has betrayed

me!.....but I will be revenged on him.—Before all, Madame, you muſt tell me if you will change your conduct, or accept a divorce?—No, Sir; I will neither renounce my company, nor be divorced.—Ah! that is too hard, as for inſtance! Very well, Madame, we ſhall ſee! we ſhall ſee!......

Briceval went out in a paſſion; he takes ſome turns in the ſtreet, like a fool, like a madman! He wavers, he heſitates; at laſt, he goes to his notary, whom he conſults. The notary comfirms him in his project of the divorce, he does not quit him till he has taken him be ore the juſtice of the peace, where Briceval, more dead than alive, ſigns the deed which the notary had drawn up. Both of them return to the hotel with the juſtice of the peace, Jeannette is not yet gone out. The notary addreſſes ſome cutting re-

proaches to her to engage her to ſign. She flies in a paſſion, ſhe cries, ſhe gives new proofs of her rough and violent character, and ſhe at laſt ſigns the deed of divorce by mutual conſent. This is not all, ſaid the notary, drawing another deed from his Portfolio, Monſieur muſt ſign this other paper to conſolidate this ſeparation.—Alas! Sir, exclaimed Briceval, when will you have done?

He takes the pen, ſigns without reading, and ſhuts himſelf up in his chamber to deliver himſelf to the exceſs of his grief: Jeannette, at the ſummit of her wiſhes, gets into a carriage with the notary and juſtice of peace, and all three go to M. Verneuil's, who is prepared to meet them.

Towards three o clock in the afternoon, a coach ſtops at the door of Briceval's hotel; a lady deſcends: it is Ma-

dame Dolmont, who aſcends to the afflicted huſband, whom ſhe found bathed in tears. Sir, ſaid ſhe, my brother and myſelf have learnt this morning the act of courage which ſeparates an unworthy woman from you. I come to calm your ſorrow, to offer you conſolation, and to entreat you to come and paſs the day with us.---Madame... I feel.....but I wiſh to be alone to-day, always!....You muſt not refuſe me this favour, Sir: your friends cannot abandon you in the dreadful ſtate you are in: they muſt conſole you, and carry you away in ſpite of yourſelf.---I cannot, Madame, after having been ſo cruelly deceived.---Do not regret a fickle woman, and come with us; Cecilia is alſo very much afflicted!---Cecilia!.....You ſaid Cecilia?---She weeps over your misfortunes, and at the miſconduct of her that was her friend...

Cecilia wiſhes to ſee you !---She weeps on my account, that kind Cecilia; Alas! I am at preſent free; but can marriage yet ſmile in my thoughts?

Briceval continued to refuſe to go to M. Verneuil's; but Madame Dolmont entreated him ſo much, that at laſt he yielded to her importunity. The deſire of ſeeing Cecilia again was without doubt the motive of his complaiſance, and that deſire was very natural; Briceval gets into the coach, and behold them at Madame Dolmont's, where he then found only Cecilia. (Cecilia herſelf was ignorant that Jeannette, a notary and a juſtice of the peace were in the houſe; all three concealed in M. Verneuil's cloſet.)

Briceval enters; he looks full at Cecilia, falls into an arm chair, and places his two hands upon his eyes, from which eſcape torrents of tears. Briceval, my

friend, exclaimed Cecilia not leſs affected, you are much to be pitied, and Jeannette has cruelly deceived us!—How different is her heart from your's, O Cecilia!—Who would have thought it! but is ſhe really culpable? Have they not deceived you? no, I can never believe that, that ineſtimable woman could fail in her duties.—She has betrayed them all!—Briceval, the world is ſo cenſorious! falſe reports....you are too ready to break.—Cecilia!....I could hold it no longer....vicious connections, gambling: my ruin would have been her work. That poor Jeannette! ſhe was formerly ſo good, ſo virtuous! for a long time ſhe formed your happineſs!—ſhe has formed my deſpair, my ſhame!...—Were is ſhe at preſent? ſhe ſighs without doubt that ſhe has loſt you.—She has proved to me that this ſeparation fulfilled her wiſhes.—

Impoſſibe, my friend, impoſſible! you are of ſuch value!—

Cecilia bluſhed, and was ſilent. Briceval examines her: Cecilia ſhall you always love me?—Can I forget the father of my child?—What! you will not harbour any reſentment for an unhappy marriage....by which I am ſufficiently puniſhed!—Chance has occaſioned all our misfortunes.—It may ſtill occaſion our felicity.—What do I hear! Briceval....you may expect!....—Alas, Cecilia, at this melancholy moment, do I know if I am ſtill worthy....if your heart?....Pardon, pardon! the cruel Jeannette has diſturbed all my faculties: ſhe has occaſioned....

Your happineſs, exclaimed a voice! and ſuddenly a door opened: Jeannette appeared, accompanied by M. Verneuil, Madame Dolmont, the notary, the juſtice of the peace and the faithful Bernard.

What! you here, Madame, exclaimed Briceval, rising up as if to go away!—Yes, I am, replied Jeannette, to unite you tender lovers, to render you man and wife.

Cecilia exclaimed in her turn: what do I hear?—It is time pursued Jeannette, that you should all do me justice: it is time finally to make myself known. You have thought me light, fickle, dissipated, a gamester, and perhaps a faithless wife; learn that I was nothing less than all these, and that I have not ceased a single moment to merit your esteem.—Dare you, interrupted Briceval?—Let me speak.

"You may remember that day, that fatal day on which Cecilia recollected Saint Ange again in my husband? What grief did I not endure from that fatal discovery? I was the rival of my friend! I had deprived her for ever of all

hope of happineſs; the moſt violent conflicts took place in my heart. On one ſide the love and eſteem that I had for my huſband, made me ſhudder at the ſole idea of loſing him; on the other gratitude, and the friendſhip that I had vowed to Mademoiſelle D'Eranville, all impoſed on me a law to reſtore her lover to her. She is a mother, ſaid I within myſelf, Cecilia! her claims are ſtronger than mine. Without the *fifty francs* which ſhe gave me, I could not have taken the journey to Chartres; I ſhould not have found my family again, and married the lover of my friend. Her misfortune is then her own work! I muſt repair all, reſtore her huſband to her, and give a father to his child! But how to go about it? M. Briceval abhorred divorce: he often told me ſo; it is impoſſible that he ſhould conſent to the ſacrifice that I

ſhould propoſe, of his hand in favour of another. Cecilia alſo would not be happy at the expence of her friend. Let us be dextrous enough to compel both of them to unite, to reſtore my huſband his liberty, in ſpite of himſelf! This plan was the conſequence of a thouſand cruel reflections: but at laſt I determined on it, and I ſtuck at nothing to put it in execution!

" That which was moſt repugnant to me, was to affect coldneſs towards my friend whom I loved the moſt, ſeeing I was the cauſe of her misfortune! I had the courage to do it; I had alſo that of raiſing quarrels with my huſband; to aſſume the faſhion of a coquette, to feign diſſipation, and, in a word, an evil conduct; for ſtrong reaſons were neceſſary to bring him to my aim. His notary, here preſent, was admitted into my confidence, and ſerved me

beyond my wiſhes; M. Verneuil alſo readily entered into my project after he had in vain ſtrove to combat it. He behaved in ſuch a manner as even to leave my dear Cecilia in the common error, for ſhe was ignorant of my deſign. Finally, this faithful ſervant, the good Bernard, was charged to give falſe intelligence to his maſter, which drove him to the laſt degree of indignation. Briceval, the nights that I paſſed far from you, were with Madame Dolmont, at her country ſeat, which ſlid away, in the practice, I dare avow it, of ſome benefactions towards the poor indigent people in her village. I have not borrowed any ſums of money from M. Verneuil, nor M. B......as they have made you believe; and the rouleaus of louis which you have given me I have depoſited them all in the hands of your notary: he has them, and he

will restore them to you. My mother instructed by me concerning my conduct, has had the goodness to approve it; in a word, I have the pride to call myself a most virtuous culprit; and, if the disagreeable part I was compelled to act has caused me to suffer, I am very well indemnified for it by your happiness, which it has wrought.

They all remained in mute astonishment. Cecilia broke silence: I knew very well, within myself, that she could not be guilty!—Generous woman, exclaimed Briceval! Alas, I have!....How shameful for me! but I will repair my fault: you shall be my wife, heavenly angel! I will resume thy soft chains. —Impossible, Sir, replied Jeannette, (*smiling*,) we are divorced; ah! the deed is signed; (*in a more serious tone*;) and afterwards you also signed the promise to wed Cecilia!—Me?—Here it is; it

is the paper that M. B.... preſented to you the ſecond time.

Briceval was ſilent, Cecilia threw herſelf into the arms of her friend: ſhe would not profit by ſo much generoſity; and then there aroſe, between Cecilia, Briceval, and Jeannette, a debate in which the utmoſt delicacy and the moſt affecting friendſhip ſhone together.

Jeannette took the reſolution to carry the little Charles in her arms between Briceval and Cecilia; well, ſaid ſhe, if you will not hear the prayers of your friend, liſten then, cruel parents, to the plaintive voice of this child, who cries to you: Reſtore my honour by given me a father, a mother that I may own in that ſociety into which you have launced my ſad exiſtence!

The child, as if by inſtinct, repeated *my ſad exiſtence!* in ſo moving a tone

that Briceval exclaimed: Well then, ſince friendſhip, nature, all conſpires to our happineſs, O Cecilia! let us then be happy.

Jeannette took the hand of her friend and put it in that of Briceval, and united them together: ſaying, my dear friend ....I poſſeſs the reward of all my cares!.....And behold, my dear Cecilia, the intereſt of your *fifty francs!...*

The notary immediately drew up the new contract; and Cecilia ſhedding the tears of ſenſibility on the boſom of Jeannette: my dear friend, ſaid ſhe, generous and truly ſublime woman, can you ſuffer that there ſhould ſtill exiſt here a miſerable being? M. Verneuil!....he has long loved you!....he ſighs in ſecret; but I have been able to diſcover his paſſion; and indeed (*ſmiling*) I am not aſtoniſhed that he ſo well ſeconded your project of di-

voece: neverthelefs, I am only jefting: his heart is too well known to me, for me to fuppofe that he had any other intention in affifting your own, than that of contributing to your happinefs. ....Jeannette will you make him happy?

M. Vernueil threw himfelf at the knees of Jeannette, and faid to her: Madame, If I have always hidden the timid and refpectful love with which you had infpired me, and which has caufed me fecretly to fhed many tears fince I found you were married, it was not with the hope of obtaining your hand that I have juftified your confidence in this affair. I faw three beings miferable by an union at which happinefs could not longer prefide: I admired your greatnefs of foul, and the novelty of your facrifice engaged me to aid you with all the means in my

power; but, Madame, I dare not yet aſpire to the happineſs of ſucceeding M. Briceval: ſo much felicity is beyond my hopes, and I only require the happineſs to remain your friend?

Jeannette ſmiled, looked at the notary, and ſaid to him: perhaps it would fatigue you too much to write a ſecond contract?....The notary anſwered by the negative, and M. Vernueil, as well as his reſpectable ſiſter, was overwhelmed with joy.

Let us all now go, continued Jeannette, to live in retirement, near to a beloved mother, and that I may refreſh myſelf a little far from thoſe bluſterous and contemptible ſocieties, which the part I had to act compelled me too long to ſee! Cecilia, Briceval, M. Vernueil, his ſiſter, Madame Dericourt, and myſelf, ſhall from henceforth form but one family. Let us not forget to

ſettle the good Emily near us, who has alſo ſhewn ſo much friendſhip for us, and to handſomely recompence the faithful Bernard, who only apparently betrayed his maſter and miſtreſs the better to ſerve them. Let us all beſtow our attentions to the education of young Charles, to whom the name of Briceval is now going to belong; and it is thus that in the midſt of good friends, and zealous ſervants, we are ſure henceforth to enjoy a conſtant happineſs.

The juſtice of the peace, affected alſo by the nobleneſs of Jeannette's procedure, preſcribed to them alltogether what was neceſſary for them to do, conformable to the laws concerning divorce, and to conclude the intended marriages; then all the friends ſet off for Chartres, where they were received with the moſt lively tenderneſs by the ineſtimable Madame Dericourt,

who approved all that had been done, and did not ceafe her eulogies on the conduct of her daughter, the good and generous Jeannette.

At the end of the time prefcribed by the laws, Briceval wedded Cecilia, and Jeannette became the wife of M. Verneuil. Cecilia a year after, became the mother of a very pretty little girl, which fhe fuckled herfelf: thefe four friends live at the prefent day in the greateft intimacy, and are happy by the fupernatural facrifice of one among them, of Jeannette, that affecting model of friendfhip and of gratitude!

FINIS.